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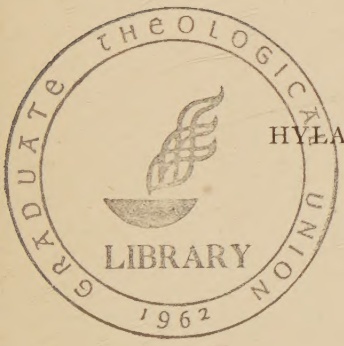

BY

HYLAND C. KIRK

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"IF I communicate the result of my inquiries to the world at large; if, as God is my witness, it be with a friendly and benignant feeling toward mankind that I readily give as wide a circulation as possible to what I esteem my best and richest possession, I hope to meet with a candid reception from all parties, and that none at least will take unjust offence, even though many things should be brought to light which will at once seem to differ with certain received opinions. I earnestly beseech all lovers of truth not to cry out that the Church is thrown into confusion by that freedom of discussion and inquiry which is granted to the schools, and ought certainly to be refused to no believer, since we are ordered to *prove all things*, and since the daily progress of the light of truth is productive far less of disturbance to the Church than of illumination and edification."—JOHN MILTON.

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PREFACE.

WHILE man is man and mind is mind, the same old questions relating to life and destiny must be considered. And progress toward their solution must necessarily be slow ; for the thinking years of each generation are few, and to each succeeding generation the old questions become new again ; and as things are, the traveller has time only to traverse a few paths in a well-trodden field ere he is directed to his own humble corner.

It was the fortune of the writer to be born a Christian and to believe implicitly in the infallible correctness of the Scriptures for many years. It was also his fortune to reach the conclusion that between truth and human reason there can be no real antagonism. The following papers are the result of this conviction, and were wrought out at first not with the design of defending, neither of destroying, nor yet harmonizing, any doctrines, but simply with the view of ascertaining the *truth* as a matter of personal interest.

In preparing these papers for the public eye, though the writer has endeavored to divest himself of bias so far as possible, and to include in his investigations as wide a range of facts as possible, he has not been free from apprehension. For he that is educated to believe any doctrine, alike with him that is educated to disbelieve the same, is

thereby to an extent disqualified from sitting as judge in the case ; and if the believer lose his faith or the disbeliever become a convert, the bias of enthusiasm thus engendered is likely to be as great a barrier to impartial judgment as the previous condition. This is one difficulty, evidently, in the way of attaining truth ; especially so in religion where the array of many doctrines, the covert assumptions of many creeds, the threatenings of the ecclesiast on the one hand and the ridicule of the sceptic on the other, serve to complicate the problem and to prevent honest, careful judgments.

Three classes of difficulties may be said to arise in the determination of religious truth :

1 Those relating to the investigator, as bias, conceit, or ignorance.

2 Those relating to the given religion, as assumed infallibility.

3 The reconciliation of natural phenomena with the given religion.

It is remarkable to what a degree of boldness the searcher for the *real* must first attain before he even dares to question the correctness of any religious precept which he may have been taught. And the reason is apparent ; for along with the inwrought opposition which the feelings must possess, goes that monition to the intellect which all religions in some form do embrace : " He that doubteth is damned," so that the first *trace* of doubt seems to amount to abjuration and denial.

However, if a man discover errors in his mother-faith and meditatively agree to consider it a delusion, he should

think twice before publishing such convictions to the world; for whatever be the function of religion as related to a future, it is, despite of contradiction, the chief conservator of morality in this life. No one has the right therefore to attempt the destruction of these barriers which protect society unless he has stronger methods of defence to substitute therefor. There have been not a few, Strauss or Comte for example, who, too late, have striven to promulgate some scheme of faith as a substitute for the system which their earlier and more powerful efforts had tended to overthrow. The process of edification, evidently, should keep pace with the process of destruction, that when the shelter of the old creed becomes insecure, the well supported canopy of the new faith may afford ample protection.

The purpose of the writer will be attained if, despite the mistakes and imperfections found herein, there shall be recognized a basis of truth, which shall stimulate others to consider more carefully and more fully, from a new—yet very old—stand-point, the problem of human destiny.

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The Possibility of Not Dying.

CHAPTER I.

FAVORABLE CONSIDERATIONS.

The Subject not Absurd—The Principle of Self-Preservation—Intuition—Wordsworth—Evolution—Defects Show Improvement Possible—The Limit of Progress, Perfection—A Practical Consideration—Certain Errors of Belief—Necessary Relations of Mind and Matter—The Analogy of Nature.

THIS subject may appear to involve an absurdity; and doubts may suggest themselves to some as to whether there are any proper data for examining a matter so much at variance with our experiences.

All human experience is, however, limited; and the most exact results of that experience which we call science can not declare to be impossible, much less absurd, any thing beyond the researches it has already made.

Were the laws and conditions of life fully known; and, if in accordance with those laws and conditions, by actual experiment death could be shown to be inevitable, our subject in that case would involve an absurdity. The proposition "all men are mortal" is an unsound assumption—unsound, because not based on actual knowledge. Men, subjected to certain conditions, are mortal. This is a true proposition. That men subjected to certain other

conditions may be immortal, we cannot deny. As knowledge is, our subject involves simply a matter of uncertainty, unless data can be procured such as shall afford means of determining the truth.

It has happened both in the realms of discovery and invention that suppositions generally regarded as absurd have proved to be correct. For ages the earth was universally believed to be flat; and as late as the period of Columbus the mass of humanity did not believe in its globular form. With the opposition, prolonged for ages, to the theory that the sun is the real centre of our universe, every student is familiar. And let it be noted that prior to the demonstration of these two facts, the sphericity of the earth and its revolution around the sun, there was precisely the same reason for denouncing these doctrines as absurd as there now is for regarding the theory of *physical immortality* as absurd. And that reason is, ignorance of the facts. The stubborn fact that all men *now* die is not different from the fact that rapid transit was impossible before steam was understood. Before the laws of refraction were known we could not see the invisibly distant, nor the invisibly small; and at that period to see what presumably could not be seen might have been with equal consistency denounced as absurd. In fact, this very proposition was denounced by the enemies of Galileo, and the accuracy of such observations was questioned even by the supposed founder of the inductive philosophy, Lord Bacon. Without examining this proposition, then, we cannot denounce it as absurd or reject it as irrational.

There are indeed certain general considerations which, when fairly considered, serve to offset in a great measure the bias of experience against this proposition.

Out of the depths of an unknown past our human life and consciousness arise. We know no other mode of existence. We are naturally impelled to maintain this existence as long as possible; and aside from the bias of experience the same principle which impels us to preserve our existence tends naturally to make us believe in its unlimited extent.

Men whose intuitions or power of grasping truth without passing through clearly defined processes, as the poets, have possessed this belief most fixedly; especially in youth, ere the rough facts of experience or the influence of social thought had opportunity to affect the mind. "Nothing was more difficult," says Wordsworth, "for me in childhood than to admit the notion of death as a state applicable to my own being. I have elsewhere said,

> "A simple child
> That lightly draws its breath,
> And feels its life in every limb,
> What should it know of death?

"But it was not so much from the source of animal vivacity that *my* difficulty came, as from a sense of the indomitableness of the spirit within me. I used to brood over the stories of Enoch and Elijah, and almost persuade myself that whatever might become of others, I should be translated in something of the same way to heaven."[1] Though the millions who may have enter-

[1] Note to "Intimations of Immortality."

tained the same view all now sleep in death, yet the very existence of such a belief is significant, demanding for its fulfilment, as it does, the realization of a life for which man is being fitted and for which he longs.

The theory that man in some way has arisen from lower forms of animal life—a theory now admitted by most thinking people,—favors this hypothesis.

Says Darwin : "Man may be excused for feeling some pride at having risen, though not through his own exertions, to the very summit of the organic scale ; and the fact of his having thus risen instead of having been aboriginally placed there, may give him hopes for a still higher destiny in the distant future." Human weaknesses and defects are proof sufficient that man has not yet reached the acme of his development.

Any individual who considers the phenomena of his own consciousness at a given instant, must be impressed with the imperfect character of its operation. There is an indefiniteness of grasp about the most vivid of our conceptions that betrays their defective nature. And if this highest human characteristic discloses weakness, it is unnecesssary to enumerate minor defects of mind and body clearly discernible to all.

That some have fewer defects than others and that the same individual has more complete powers at certain times than at others, are facts sufficient to prove the possibility of human improvement ; and so long as recognized defects exist, so long it is clearly evident that the limit of improvement has not been reached. Indeed the only logical limit to progress is perfection, whatever the

latter be; and a satisfactory limit to progress must at least include life and happiness.

At this point a practical consideration fully demonstrating the importance of this subject as well as proving the need of observing it, becomes obvious. If physical immortality be an element of human destiny the sooner we recognize that fact the better. The influence of the mind will be found to be the chief factor in the problem; and the traveller in some pathless forest without compass or guide, or the mariner on some unknown ocean drifting at the will of the wind, might sooner expect to reach a desired destination than for man individually or collectively to attain such an ultimatum without a preconceived purpose; while the bare recognition of such a possibility would be found doubtless to radically affect many of our social institutions.

It would not be a difficult task to show that fundamental defects now exist in our systems of thought growing out of misconceived views of human destiny, thus proving some other theory rather than the usually accepted notions to be true. Instances will suggest themselves to the reader, of comparatively recent date, where parents have deliberately murdered their innocent children in order that they might send them, according to their insane fancies, from this world of wickedness directly to a world of happiness. An assassin strikes down the President of the United States, and assigns a similar reason as an excuse for his dastardly conduct. "I presume," said the would-be murderer, "that the President is a Christian, and that he will be happier in paradise than

here." It may be excusable to inquire wherein, according to the usual theory, was the logic of these murderers at fault? If the innocent daughter of the Pocasset murderer is happier in *heaven* than she would have been in this world, subject to the influences of poverty, hardship, and perhaps crime, is there not some justification for the bloody act of her fanatical parent? When ferocious fanatics, urging on the massacre of Beziers, shouted—

"Kill all! God will know His own!"

from the same stand-point were they not equally consistent?

These extreme cases may serve to bring out more distinctly what seems to be the result of a false premise in reasoning. To many minds it seems illogical and inconsistent that the economy of this universe should be such that a class of beings should be suddenly translated by death, which seems to be a loss of power, from a sphere where they possess at best limited powers and limited happiness, to another sphere where they immediately come to possess unlimited powers and unlimited happiness; and this seems the more inconsistent when we reflect that we have no actual knowledge of this second sphere whatever. Yet the facts of human aspiration, of organic progress, and of the existence of human weakness and defects capable of being remedied, impress us with the belief that life has something more of significance than the fragmentary existence now known to us. This impression is confirmed too by considering the necessary relations of mind to the material universe. Without thought—the

highest form in which life manifests itself,—the universe of matter, with its endless number of world systems, would be practically a blank. An appreciative element, or mind; and an element to be appreciated, or matter, seem to be necessary to existence—the one duly proportioned to the other. And taking the analogy of our own globe and the processes of nature into account, there is certainly reason in regarding these planetary systems as so many harvest fields of the universe, in which an appreciative class of existences are developed akin to man, but of a higher and more complete power than man.

CHAPTER II.

THE HISTORICAL ARGUMENT.

The Kind of Evidence Demanded—Personal Power—Classical and Sacred History—Bearings of Christianity—Summary of Christ's Life His Moral Teachings Unquestioned—Evidence for the Miraculous—Inviolability of Nature—Existence as a Whole—Persistence of Force—Evolution not Uniform—Antecedent Social Conditions—Parallel Philosophy—The Early Church—Variations—Claims upon Reason.

WHILE the possibility of a continued life of the *kind* we now experience cannot be denied; yet, since that which is possible admits of being realized under the right conditions, the possibility of immortality cannot be positively affirmed, except by showing that the conditions for its realization have existed, do exist, or may exist hereafter. And if these conditions cannot be shown completely, then the comparative strength of the argument will depend upon the degree in which such conditions are reached and their existence proven.

It would be comparatively easy to show that a man by observing the known laws of health could reach a very great age, say one hundred years; because well authenticated instances are known of persons who have attained that age. But it will be observed that our data must necessarily include other facts than those relating merely to the longevity of individuals. We cannot see very far into the future, the chances of death by accident are many, and the evidence that produces conviction in us

that a person is destined to live on unceasingly, must be proof that a person has *power* to do so.

This idea of personal power appears to have been appreciated in the earlier ages, and hence men who had become especially renowned for some quality, as learning, piety, or valor, were said in certain cases to have become gods, and to have left the earth without suffering death. The Greeks gave such accounts of Empedocles, Apollonius, and some others. Romulus at the close of a long and successful reign is said to have ascended to heaven in a chariot of fire. Elijah the prophet, it will be remembered, as narrated in the Scriptures, took a similar leave of the earth, and the same record tells us that "Enoch was translated that he should not see death." The religious books of Eastern nations, as well as the traditions of some tribes of American Indians, afford like accounts.

These reports, to say the least, are so meagre that they can have little or no bearing on our subject.

It has been argued that this power of immortality was attained in the person of Christ. And since his character and the wonderful powers claimed for him must constitute a valuable support to any argument based upon unquestioned data favoring the present hypothesis, it will be consistent at this point to consider the bearings of Christianity upon this question, as interpreted in the light of recent science.

There was a child born four years before that period known as the Christian era—a child of whom it was said, "He was born of a virgin." This child was born at a remarkable period, amid a peculiar people, and in a coun-

try, though of a rugged surface, yet possessing a rare climate and soil. Of his boyhood there is little account, save that having acquired a taste for theological study, he became at an early age well versed in the prevailing religious doctrines of his nation. In his early manhood he appears to have employed a portion of his time as a mechanical laborer. When he had attained the age of about thirty years, he began to evince, it is said, certain remarkable powers. He is reported to have healed diseases by the apparent exercise of his will, and on several occasions to have restored the dead to life. Having asserted that he had power to lay down his own life and take it up again, he suffered death to be imposed upon him, and rose the third day from the grave. He is reported to have subsequently passed bodily through the walls of a building, and finally, from a concourse of his followers, to have disappeared in the heavens. Such is a brief summary of the chief events in the life of the founder of Christianity.

To the unbiassed reader these accounts certainly appear incredible. They are totally opposed to the general experience of mankind, and in their bare outline do not differ materially from other marvellous stories of antiquity generally considered fabulous. Still that such a child was born is incontestably true, and though the assertion that he was born of a virgin needs for its confirmation, evidence probably stronger than the fact of parthenogenesis among insects,[1] yet the accounts of his wonderful deeds and powers are so thoroughly incorporated with

[1] See Joseph Cook's Lectures.

the record of his life that to simply consider these accounts false is to leave the problem of Christianity untouched. A rational and satisfactory solution of the phenomenon of Christianity should include a careful and impartial examination of the evidence supporting these accounts. The competency and reliability of the writers, the periods at which they severally wrote, and possible interpolations and changes in the text, should be considered. But this work has been repeatedly and, in several instances, thoroughly done.

Among those favorable to the claims of Christianity, who have attempted this work, are the German theologians Neander, in "Das Leben Jesu Christi"; Tholuck, in "Credibility of the Gospel History"; Frederich Bleek, in his contribution to the authenticity of John's Gospel; and Constantin Tischendorf, a learned professor of Leipsic, in "When were our Gospels Written?" Among later English writers, Dr. Mozley in his Bampton Lectures, Dr. John H. Newman in "Two Essays on Miracles," and the Rev. F. W. Farrar in "The Witness of History to Christ" may be mentioned. Of American writers, Prof. Geo. P. Fisher of Yale College, Dr. Philip Schaff of New York, Prof. Calvin Stowe, and the Rev. Horace Bushnell have written similar works. All of these works may be said to agree in the fact that they are apologetic in character, and were mainly written to refute the attacks of criticisms adverse to the supernatural claims of Christianity, as found in the works of Strauss, Baur, Renan, and other authors. They are, it is true, open to the objection that the writers were severally possessed of a strong bias toward the conclusions

they reach ; still it is inconsistent from any point of view to suppose that these conclusions are wholly erroneous. A recent anonymous publication called "Supernatural Religion," a most careful and thorough treatise, though reaching a conclusion adverse to the supernatural in Christianity, yet along with the works of Strauss, Baur, and Renan does not question the existence of Christ, and, to an extent, regards his teachings as historic and authentic, says : "We shall probably never be able to determine now how far the great Teacher may, through his own speculations or misunderstood spiritual utterances, have originated the supernatural doctrines subsequently attributed to him, and by which his whole history and system soon became infused.

* * * * * "Whatever explanation may be given, however, it is undeniable that the earliest teaching of Jesus recorded in the Gospel which can be regarded in any degree as historical, is pure morality, almost, if not quite, free from theological dogmas."[1] This guarded statement, in view of the extreme carefulness of the writer throughout, amounts to a strong admission of the authenticity of Christ's teachings. The same writer speaks more openly in the following : "Whilst we retain pure and unimpaired the light of Christian morality we are no longer bound to believe a theology which outrages reason and moral sense."

From Strauss' "Life of Jesus," of which Dr. A. S. Farrar says, "As a specimen of didactic and critical writing it is perhaps unrivalled in the German literature,"[2] we quote :

[1] "Supernatural Religion," vol. ii, page 485.
[2] "History of Free Thought."

"I do not think that the case is so bad as has lately been maintained, as that we cannot know for certain of any one of the texts which are put into the mouth of Jesus in the Gospels whether he really uttered it or not. I believe that there are some which we may ascribe to Jesus with all that amount of probability beyond which we cannot generally go in historical matters, and I have endeavored above to explain the signs by which we may recognize such."[1]

There is, then, from the most ultra stand-point and in the light of the most rigid criticism, as evinced in the works of these two writers, an historic basis for the existence and moral doctrines of Christ.

And in view of this fact it will be sufficient, so far as this phase of our subject is concerned, to observe that the same records which tell us of the non-miraculous and natural in Christ's life also relate the miraculous and supernatural; so that if we accept the one class of events as true, historically, we have the same ground for accepting the other.

Nevertheless, however strong the historic argument may be, the stilling of the tempest by the mere exercise of the will, the healing of disease or the raising of the dead by such means, are not such unimportant and ordinary matters as to be believed on mere verbal statements, arguments, suppositions, and explanations. To him who recognizes the inviolability of nature's laws, the strongest historical evidence is utterly impotent to prove a violation of those laws. Were nature capricious in her manifestations there could be no such thing as an explanation given of any subject; since

[1] "New Life of Jesus."

every explanation is but the reduction of a given phenomenon to a consistency with facts or truths known to be consistent among themselves. Without order in the manifestations of existence, correct judgment and accuracy of observation would be alike impossible, and inconceivable confusion would exist in mind as in matter. The ground of belief in the most cherished doctrine, along with the ground of belief in all things else, would be swept away, and universal skepticism would be the only logical result.

Since the accounts of Christ are credible on evidence only, and since the credibility of evidence is wholly a matter of reason, not only must an adequate explanation of his life and doctrines accord with reason, but any construction put upon them inconsistent with logic or known facts tends, with rational minds, the more strongly to prevent belief in him.

But, in view of the strong historic evidence that Christ lived, that he is the author of the doctrines attributed to him, and in view of the close relationship which his alleged miracles sustain to his teachings as set forth in the records, let us consider whether it be not possible, even in accord with the order of nature and with human experience that Christ should have lived possessing the miraculous nature and performing the wonderful deeds ascribed to him. Only by reasoning from the known can we hope to attain the unknown ; and though the revelation of that mode of consciousness wherein existence is discerned is more wonderful than any specific miracle—though existence is a miracle with which no special mode of existence whether possible or conceivable would bear comparison,—yet that fact

proves nothing. Nor can we hope to substantiate the occurrence of an unusual phenomenon by citing the occurrence of a more unusual one, unless between the two some relation can be shown to exist. If the miraculous deeds in question do not accord with specific modes of existence as known to mankind generally, may they not accord with existence as a whole? Human history and human experience constitute but a point in duration; and though we cannot conceive of the capricious violation of nature's laws as a possibility, it were unphilosophic to assert that these laws do only embrace the facts and experiences within the ken of man generally.

Let us notice a certain order of facts. To-day we find a great variety of modes of life on the earth. Man in a degree civilized and cultured; man ignorant and superstitious; man nomadic and barbaric; finally, man in the lowest degree sensual, eating the flesh of his brother man and practically a brute. We find innumerable varieties of lower animal life, ranging through as many degrees of intelligence as degrees of form. We find vegetable life in still greater profusion and variety. This state of things did not always exist: there was a time when barbaric man was the highest type; a still earlier time when the gross savage was the only human species. At a still earlier epoch man did not exist at all, the highest type of life being akin to species of the lower vertebrates now existent. And thus we find, going backward in time, there was a period when no life existed at all upon the earth; low forms at first appeared of no distinct type, then higher forms, and thus on in a progressive series did life manifest itself until, as its

highest representative, man comparatively civilized and cultured appeared. And what do these facts signify? It is a simple axiom of mathematics, that two constantly diverging lines must ultimately be separated by an infinite distance, and unless we suppose that this progress is now to cease we must conclude that vastly higher manifestations of life shall appear in the future than are evinced in present civilization and culture. But if we put any faith in the inferences of science we cannot conclude that this progress is now to cease. Force—the one force existing in and through all things, which cannot be destroyed—*persists* to the production of an equilibrium between the internal and external conditions of life; *i. e.*, to the production of perfect life. Since the highest manifestation of life known to us is that exhibited in consciousness or the partial comprehension of life by itself, a complete knowledge of the laws and conditions of life, as well as the power to apply and use such knowledge, must at some time evidently be reached. Now is it not possible that this equilibrium between the internal and external factors of human existence—the attainment of the knowledge of the laws of life and the power to use such knowledge—was reached in the person of Christ? Three considerations tend to this conlusion. First, the fact that evolution does not act uniformly or constantly to produce higher types. Says Spencer: "Evolution is commonly conceived to imply in every thing an *intrinsic* tendency to become something higher, but this is an erroneous conception of it. In all cases it is determined by the co-operation of inner and outer factors. * * * Hence, the truth, that while for immeasurable periods some types

have neither advanced nor receded, and while in other types there has been further evolution, there are many types in which retrogression has happened." This being the case it is quite consistent that one perfect being should antecede by some thousands of years a race of perfect beings.

Secondly, this conclusion is supported by the character of the social conditions antecedent to Christ's appearance, and under which his advent occurred. The Dark Ages may be said to constitute the hollow between two great waves of progress, the one culminating some centuries before the downfall of the Western Empire, and to which Egyptian, Assyrian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman civilizations were tributary; the other, we may trust, just beginning to accumulate dimensions and force. Now we cannot deny that the former undulations may have reached heights far above our present status. While we even now make the books which have come down to us from this former epoch of civilization,—books scriptural and classical,—the data, largely, for thought and action, it is not improbable that practical workers of that period, making nature the basis of their investigations, may have reached much higher ground than has yet been attained in this period. True, this supposition could not be made to include progress in the mechanic arts, nor the accumulation and classification of stores of knowledge, nor many things relating purely to social advancement. But if the relation of man as an individual—the relation of man, in his mental and physical aspects, to nature and to existence—be regarded, the claim that much higher ground was or may have been reached,

is a consistent one. Our knowledge now is largely a matter of words valuable only from a social point of view. We have, it is true, the names of the parts and the functions of many of the parts of the human body ; we may know something of the relations existing between body and mind ; but we do not know the possible results of a system of right living most favorable to the development of this body and mind. The general fact of great social progress antecedent to the advent of Christ, warrants us in supposing that many schemes of morals had been tried with reference to attaining the greatest results in the case of a man individually; and history supports the supposition. To be specific, one of the doctrines held by the Hebrew fathers was that of a continued existence on earth simply. Had Adam, their great ancestor, not fallen into sin they supposed that he and his posterity would have lived forever ; and whoever should attain righteousness—the primitive, perfect state of Adam,—they supposed would so live. "The soul that sinneth it shall die," saith the prophet Ezekiel; "but if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. * * * For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God ; wherefore turn and live ye." Another ancient doctrine of the Jews was that of the Messiah, or Anointed One, who should come as their king and deliverer. "The Lord thy God" says the chieftain Moses, "will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me." Without reference to other elements of the Hebrew faith, here is evidence of an unusual

belief exerting its influence directly and hereditarily through a number of centuries, in one particular urging individuals to the attainment of perfect life, and in another impressing itself on the awakening consciousness of the Hebrew youth with the question, "Am I this Messiah who shall free God's chosen people from the evils to which they are constantly subjected?" Admitting that the Jews were sincere in their faith, this unusual doctrine must have been productive of an unusual result. That they were sincere to fanaticism, is shown by the scarce traces of environing civilizations existing in their religious literature; while as a fact they were at one time tributary to Egypt, at another to Babylonia and Persia, at another to Macedonia, and finally to Rome; and were from their geographical position and enterprising proclivities the focus of all that intellectual and social growth. The three chief sects of the Jews, the formal Pharisees, the sceptical Sadducees, and "the practical, virtuous Essenes,"[1] fairly represent the stages of development resulting from the clashing and decomposition of these national creeds and doctrines—and of which Christ was the culmination.

The third and still more convincing consideration, however, must be found in the doctrines said to have been entertained and taught by Christ himself. As of the national intellectuality, so of the individual. Christ was undoubtedly a Jew from his early training, but he so far outgrew his Jewish tenets that his followers, surveying his character from the narrow stand-point of Judaism, frequently misunderstood him; thus his biographers, in

[1] Philo.

order to make the royal claims they assume for him conform to Jewish law and tradition, indulge in what, secularly speaking, would be termed a *bull;* for, though recounting the "dream" of his miraculous conception, they severally quote the *male* line of his ancestry.

Christ taught, "He that is perfect shall be as his master," and enjoined his followers, "Be ye therefore perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect"; and perfection—perfect life—is a salient doctrine of evolution. Indeed it may be safely asserted that the principal doctrines of evolution relating to human life individually, and to individual and human progress, were all anticipated in the teachings which Christ promulgated. As proof of this statement let us compare extracts from the philosophy of evolution, as set forth by one of its leading exponents, with *Christianity*, as expressed in the words of its founder, the extracts embracing prominent topics.

The Knowledge of God.

EVOLUTION.	CHRISTIANITY.
Our own and all other existence is a mystery absolutely and forever beyond *our* comprehension.	No man hath seen God at any time.
The consciousness of an *inscrutable* Power manifested to *us* through all phenomena has been growing ever clearer.	Ye have neither heard his voice at any time nor seen his shape.
The Power which the uni-	No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man who is in heaven.

verse manifests to *us* is utterly inscrutable.

The reality underlying appearances is totally and forever inconceivable by *us*.

Whoever contemplates the relation in which it stands to the truths of science in general will see that this truth, transcending demonstration is, the persistence of force.

And this persistence of the universe is the persistence of that unknown Cause, Power, or Force which is manifested to us through all phenomena.

No man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son and to whom the Son shall reveal him.

God is a spirit.

A spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have.

The words which I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life.

God's Relation to Man.

Whoever hesitates to utter that which he thinks the highest truth lest it be too much in advance of his time, may reassure himself by looking at his acts from an impersonal point of view. * * * He like every other man may properly consider him-

Call no man your Father upon earth, for one is your Father who is in heaven.

My doctrine is not mine but his that sent me. If any man do his will he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God or whether I speak of myself.

self as one of the myriad agencies through whom works the unknown Cause; and when the unknown Cause produces in him a certain belief he is thereby authorized to profess and act out that belief.

It is not ye that speak but the spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God; for God giveth not the spirit by measure.

Morality.

Granted that we are chiefly interested in ascertaining what is relatively right, it still follows that we must first consider what is absolutely right; since the one conception presupposes the other.

If it is true that pure rectitude prescribes a system of things far too good for men as they are, it is not less true that mere expediency does not of itself tend to establish a system of things any better than that which exists.

Be ye therefore perfect as your Father who is in heaven is perfect.

Seek ye first the kingdom of God and *his righteousness* and all these things shall be added unto you.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.

Immortality.

Were there no changes in the environment but such as

If a man keep my saying he shall never see death.

the organism had adapted changes to meet and were it never to fail in the efficiency with which it met them, there would be eternal existence and universal knowledge.

Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.

I have power to lay down my own life and take it up again.

Heaven.

Thus from the persistence of force * * * we finally draw from it a warrant for the belief, that evolution can end only in the establishment of the greatest perfection and most complete happiness.

So shall it be at the end of the world * * * Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

The kingdom of God is within you.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

The Will.

Freedom of the will, did it exist, would be at variance with the beneficent necessity displayed in the organism and its environment. * * * There would be a retardation of that grand progress which is bearing humanity onward to a higher intelligence and a nobler character.

No man can come to me except the Father who hath sent me draw him.

The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do.

No man can come unto me except it were given unto him of my Father.

After this manner therefore pray ye : * * * *Thy* will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

Chastity.

Everywhere and always evolution is antagonistic to procreative dissolution.

The particular kind of further evolution which man is hereafter to undergo, is one which, more than any other, may be expected to cause a decline in his powers of reproduction.

There be eunuchs that have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it let him receive it.

{ Christ having been asked when his kingdom should come, answered : }

When two shall be one, and that which is without as that which is within ; and the male with the female neither male nor female.

Faith.

The persistence of the connection between the states of consciousness is proportionate to the persistence of the connection between the agencies to which they answer. * * * The law enunciated is * * * the law to which psychical changes conform more and more as intelligence becomes higher, but which can be perfectly conformed to only by perfect intelligence.

Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be ye removed and be thou cast into the sea, and shall not doubt in his heart but shall believe those things which he saith shall come to pass, he shall have whatsoever he saith.

If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.

Action.

There is a wide difference between the formal assent men give to a proposition they cannot gainsay, and the efficient belief which produces active conformity to it. Not by precept though heard daily ; not by example unless it is followed ; but only by action often caused by the related feelings can a moral habit be formed.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven ; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven.

Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house upon a rock. * * * And every one that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man who built his house upon the sand.

Rule of Human Relation.

If the dictate, "Live for self," is wrong in one way, the opposite dictate "Live for others," is wrong in another way. The rational dictate is, "Live for self and others."

Instead of senselessly reiterating in catechisms and

Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.

Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you and persecute

Church services the *duty of doing good to those that hate us*, while an undoubted belief in the *duty of retaliation* is implied by our parliamentary debates, the articles in our journals, and the conversations over our tables, it would be wiser and more manly to consider *how far* the *first* should go in mitigation of the *last*.

you ; *that ye may be the children of your Father who is in heaven.*

The Sabbath.

The child of Puritanic parents, brought up in the belief that Sabbath-breaking brings after it all kinds of transgressions, * * * is somewhat perplexed in after years when acquaintance with more of his countrymen has shown him exemplary lives joined with non-observance of the Sunday.

The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath ; therefore the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath-day.

If a man on the Sabbath-day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken, are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath-day ?

It is lawful *to do well* on the Sabbath-day.

That there is an agreement and for the most part a very close agreement displayed in these parallel passages no one

can deny; but there is also an important difference—a difference upon which our argument must depend quite as much as upon the points of similarity. This difference has reference to the stand-points or premises from which these two schemes of thought evidently proceed. While the one rests upon the data of experience, the other is based upon the assumed fact of a controlling intelligence. If one foundation is terrestrial and human, the other may be regarded as celestial and divine. While both systems agree that no man knoweth the Father, Christ assumes for himself that he does know the Father, and that he is ὁ μὸνος γένος, the only *born* son of God. While both agree that human actions are the consequence of an antecedent omnipotence, Christ assumes a superiority for himself as the result of this common antecedent Cause. Though both assert that right must be absolute in its esssential nature, evolution advocates expediency as a matter of practice, while Christ's injunction is "Be ye perfect." While evolution claims the possibility of an endless life, Christ assumes the actuality of an endless life. And thus, though starting from opposite stand-points, these two systems are seen to coincide and support each other in regard to future happiness, to the human will, in regard to the exercise of chastity, of faith, individual activity, and correct social relations; save that the former contemplates more closely the immediate, the practical and the earthly, and the latter has reference to the ultimate, the attainable, and the heavenly. Both systems agree in opposing the purely conventional: thus, of observing the Sabbath, Christ's doctrine is, It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath;

it is lawful to do evil at no time. Hence all days are alike as regards his system, and the observance of Sunday is made to depend rather upon physiological and moral grounds than on Jewish law and tradition ; which accords with the apparent fact that no one revolution of the earth on its axis is performed in a more sacred portion of time than another.

As regards the essential doctrine of immortality, evolution, starting from the secular stand-point, demonstrates with all the accuracy of scientific truth so far as known, that the true end of human existence is human perfectionment ; while Christ asserted that perfection, a state he assumed for himself, included the power of an endless life. To the stage of perfection Christ assigned various terms, as heaven, the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God, This is shown by comparing the following passages: "If thou wilt be *perfect*, go and sell what thou hast and give to the poor and thou shalt have treasure in *heaven*." "A rich man shall hardly enter into the *kingdom of heaven*." "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the *kingdom of God*."

Christ's doctrine of a future life seems to include two phases, applicable to two classes of individuals ; which doctrines may be best shown by selections from his own words.

1st. Immediate Immortality, of which he was the type. "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." "He that heareth my words and believeth on him that sent me hath everlasting life." "The Father gave me a commandment what I

should say and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting." "If a man keep my saying he shall never see death." "I have power to lay down my own life and take it up again. As the living Father hath sent me and I live by the Father, so he that eateth (*i. e.*, comprehendeth) me, even he shall live by me." "He that heareth my words and believeth on him that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

2d. The Resurrection. "He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." "No man can come unto me except it were given unto him of my Father. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one who seeth the Son and believeth on him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day. Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." "There are last which shall be first, and first which shall be last."

The method and manner by which perfection is attainable is shown to some extent in the following:

"If ye continue in my word then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." "Go ye and learn what that meaneth: I will have mercy and not sacrifice." "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things

(*i. e.*, life, wealth and friends) shall be added unto you." "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation." "So is the kingdom of God as if a man should put seed into the ground, and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up he knoweth not how."

The parables of The Sower, The Lighted Candle, The Tares, The Mustard Seed, The Leaven, The Treasure, The Pearls, The Net, The Unforgiving Debtor, The Good Shepherd, The Importunate Neighbor, The Rich Fool, The Great Supper, The Lost Sheep, The Lost Silver, The Prodigal Son, The Unjust Steward, The Rich Man and Lazarus, The Unjust Judge, The Pharisee and the Publican, The Hired Laborers, The Ten Servants, The Vineyard, The Wedding Garment, The Ten Virgins, The Talents, and The Man Taking a Far Journey, all illustrate phases of the same doctrine, showing the method and manner of attaining, a character of perfection,—heaven,—the kingdom of God.

The meagre incidents narrated of Christ's own life support his doctrine of perfection. In his career he is represented at one time as saying "Behold I cast out devils and do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected." At one time he says, "My Father is greater than I"; and subsequently, "I and my Father are one." And after his resurrection he is represented as saying, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."

While urging all to attain the kingdom of God, there is evidence that at the time of his ministry Christ regarded himself as the only one who had attained this perfect life, as shown in the following passages:

"I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall have the way of life." "Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God; he hath seen the Father."

"No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the son of man who is in heaven."

"Except a man be born (γεννηθῇ) again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

"God so loved the world that he gave his only born (μονογενη) Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

"All things are delivered to me of my Father; and no man knoweth who the Son is but the Father; and who the Father is but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him."

That the doctrine of an endless life was held by the early Church is testified to by Lucian, who in the second century speaks thus derisively of the Christians: "The wretched people have persuaded themselves that they are altogether immortal, and will live forever; therefore they despise death, and many of them meet it of their own accord." This statement, made, as Neander [1] tells us, as a sarcasm on Paul's preaching of the resurrection, is seen to accord with Christ's twofold doctrine of immortality.

It is fairly proven, perhaps, that certain of the records from which these statements of Christian doctrine have been taken, were written more than a century after the advent of Jesus. It is certain that the writers disagree in

[1] Neander's "Ch. Hist.," page 94.

regard to the same matters ; as in regard to the genealogies, and inscription on the cross. Neither is it entirely certain who their several authors were. But suppose that his biographers in some cases mistook his meaning : thus, three tell of casting out devils, while the fourth does not ; suppose that fabrications and exaggerations crept into the traditions concerning him before they were committed to writing. These things will signify nothing if there be found underneath all the dross a system of truth in perfect accord with scientific deductions and known facts.

The superstitious tales, fallacious reasoning, and disagreements of the various writers will then constitute a stronger evidence of the truth of Christianity, than if the various accounts agreed perfectly and the superstitions and fallacies were left out. For where witnesses agree there may be collusion, and where they make events subordinate to their own theories there may be fabrication ; but diversity in the testimony of witnesses disproves collusion, while weak and inefficient explanations of facts, though lowering the intellectual standing of a witness, disprove fabrication. This last consideration would strengthen the supposition that the writers were deceived, in case it should be found that Christ's doctrines and means for the performance of his deeds were inconsistent with known facts ; and hence it appears that science must constitute the strongest evidence of the truth or falsity of Christianity. But it should be borne in mind that Christ's method was rigidly scientific. This is shown in such statements as the following : " By their fruits ye shall know them." " These signs shall follow them that believe," etc. " The works that I do in

my Father's name they bear witness of me." "He that believeth on me the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to my Father."

The physical conditions under which Christ is said to have exerted his miraculous powers do not appear to have been essentially different from existing conditions; and why a man, the external conditions being the same, should at a certain period exert a certain power of giving life and controlling the tempest, and why no man can exert the same power now to the same end, is mysterious. But if it be shown that under existing conditions the same wonderful results might be attained as Christ attained, providing that the same course were pursued as he pursued, the possibility of his having possessed miraculous power must be admitted. Admitting that in the case of every man "All actions whatever must be determined by those psychical connections which experience has generated, either in the life of the individual or in that general antecedent life of which the accumulated results are organized in his constitution," and it follows that Christ's actions, whatever they were, were immediately determined by the ideas, feelings, and motives which filled his mind. Again, on the supposition that the ideas and motives of Christ differed from those of other men, and were also more correct, if it be admitted that the force constituting life becomes great according to the more perfect adjustment of internal with external relations, we must admit that the force constituting his life was essentially greater than that exhibited in the lives of other men.

The cardinal doctrine of the Christian faith, when fairly interpreted, is the doctrine of at*one*ment, of becoming perfect as the Father, and one with him. Considering the diverse constructions which have been put upon Christ's mission and work, it is a little remarkable that there are no passages attributed to him in the New Testament irreconcilable with this doctrine. Supposing him to have successfully carried out his own doctrine, there is a meaning to such expressions as "I have overcome the world," "I have power to lay down my own life and take it up again." There is a meaning to Christ's resurrection—it is an evidence of power in the perfected Being to withstand death even when subjected to its ordinary causes. There is a meaning to the resurrection of Lazarus—it is an evidence of power in the perfected Being, not only to preserve his own life, but to renew or reorganize the life of the dead. If this seems fanciful it is certainly consistent as an inference.

It would appear unfortunate in one respect that a perfect being, with powers which we deem miraculous, should have existed in an age so abounding in accounts of the marvellous and so indifferent to discriminating between true and false wonders. Yet individual development must precede social evolution, and admitting the possibility of such an existence, there is more reason for supposing such a personage to arise where such possibility is believed in, than elsewhere; for humanity in its higher developments always works to an ideal, and an ideal carried through successive generations becomes an efficient cause. No man can ever expect to awake and find

himself perfect without a prior conception of what perfection is.

Should sound criticism strip from the gospel narratives all the marvels ; should the star in the east, the wonderful voice at the baptism, and many other wonderful matters reported as having occurred before his birth, during his active ministry, or after his resurrection be discarded as contrary to reason ; yet, as has been shown, the existence of such discrepancies would serve to strengthen the probability of the occurrence of things which accord with his cardinal doctrines as supported by science. And discrepancies of this kind with entire consistency could be referred to those things of which he said to his followers "ye cannot bear them now."

Had Christ not declared himself the son of man alike with all other men ; the son of God alike with all other men, differing only in the degree of his sonship ; if he had not urged that the truth of his doctrines should be proven by the attainment of knowledge and powers equal to his own ; had he not declared that greater things even than he did should be performed by those who should believe in him ; were not the evidences of such belief comparatively wanting at present ; was not man now very imperfect in all respects and illy adapted to his habitat ; and finally did not Christ's doctrine accord not only with human aspirations universally but in its general aspects with a philosophy perhaps the most consistent with known facts of any ever proposed,—if it were not for these things the discrepancies in the accounts concerning Christ would tend to destroy rational belief in him. But

would the perfect man have a more rational doctrine than that of Christ? Or would the perfect man do less wonderful or less benignant deeds than he did?

It might be affirmed that the doctrine of perfection was not an unusual or exceptional doctrine among the ancients; that Plato, Aristotle, and other philosophers held to a similar idea, and that a shadowy notion of this kind has prevailed among men through all time. This is no doubt true, but such a doctrine has never been held as a national doctrine operating on a race for a number of centuries except among the Jews. And if we except the one case of Christ there would be little difficulty in showing that at all times and places this particular idea has been so overburdened and interwoven with false notions as to have been, in its full sense, inoperative.

There are in the teachings of the early disciples and followers of Christ, both traces of this doctrine and evidences of such a variety of other ideas interwoven, as to account for the fact that the former as an effective cause tending to the elevation of the race became valueless. Even St. Paul, although he alludes to the kingdom of God, and preaches that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," though he asserts that "the last enemy to be destroyed is death," yet he seems to have amalgamated Judaism with Christianity in his doctrines of sacrifice, substitutional expiation, and grace. Though St. Peter argues that men "might be partakers of the divine nature," and that "Christ also suffered for us leaving us an example," yet it is quite impossible to reconcile his view of the underworld with modern research or reasoning.

And if thus early in its career Christianity began to vary from its original stem, how great was that variance when Gnosticism and Paganism in its various forms came into contact with it! So far from being the way of life—Christ was but a name, a pretext for the commission of the most atrocious crimes and cruelties. From being a religion of nature with God the father and ruler of all, and the kingdom of God a thing to be developed in man through progress in all things, Christianity in the earlier stages came to be regarded as including many of the myths of Judaism and the Pagan systems, as teaching the existence of a hell under the earth, a heaven in the air, and a clearly pronounced anthropomorphic ruler of both. The rebound from this grossness caused the complete separation of Christianity and nature, and it is a lamentable fact that the prevailing sects of to-day ignore the study of nature as quite unnecessary to a conformity with Christ's teachings.

Interpreted in the light of evolution and science Christianity presents very strong claims upon human reason. The objection of the historical critic that "No just notion of the true nature of history is possible without a perception of the inviolability of the chain of finite causes and the impossibility of miracles," is at once turned aside. Christianity as thus interpreted, so far as Christ's miracles are counterparts of his doctrine, appears as the outgrowth of a scheme of life toward which evolution declares all humanity to be tending.

From this stand-point the mystery enveloping the person of Christ in his human and divine relations is swept

away ; Trinitarianism and Unitarianism coalesce ; Christianity is seen to be entirely consistent with the fact of a material universe ; according fully with human hopes and aspirations, and presenting definite ideas of the future life ; thus strengthening our faith in the power of the heroic son of man who said : "I am the resurrection and the life ; he that believeth in me though he were dead yet shall he live, and he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

CHAPTER III.

THE DESIRE FOR LIFE.—ITS CAUSE AND EFFECTS.

Living Forever—Objections—Myths and Legends—Poetry and Argument—Suffering, Sorrow, and Ennui—Sour Grapes—The Desire Varies as Life Varies—No Feeling or Faculty Free from it—A Parallelogram of Forces—The Heavens Believed in—Stoicism—Religious Founders—The Instinct of Immortality—The Logical Sequence—Mind and Brain—Unknown Possibilities.

IS it desirable to live? If present time and immediate existence only are regarded, nearly all persons answer this question affirmatively. But if the question be framed so as to include the infinite prolongation of natural life, or put in the form—is it desirable to live forever? we shall find that many have seen fit to reply in the negative. Volumes of imaginative fancies, of poetry, and argument could be compiled tending to show the folly of such a desire, and the misery which would necessarily result to man from an existence unceasingly and eternally prolonged. The student of classical literature is familiar with the myth of Tithonus, a mortal whom Jupiter endowed with immortality. Old age grew upon him and he became,

> "A white-haired shadow roaming like a dream
> The ever silent spaces of the East,"

only glad to have Jove take back his gift and permit him to die.

"In a certain lake in Munster, Ireland, it is said there were two islands : into the first death could never enter, but age and sickness and the weariness of life and the paroxysms of fearful suffering were all known there, and they did their work till the inhabitants, tired of their immortality, learned to look upon the opposite island as upon a haven of repose ; they launched their barks upon its gloomy waters, they touched its shores, and were at rest."[1] The ceaseless dangers and calamities encountered by Cartaphilus, the Wandering Jew, a legend which has formed the basis of so many works of fiction, possesses a similar import. Readers of "Gulliver's Travels" will remember the sad picture of the old *Struldbrugs*, in the kingdom of Luggnagg, to whom an endless existence was joined with an ever-increasing degree of feebleness and imbecility.

In these fictions are set forth as incidental to a continued existence the evils of old age, disease, and suffering. The same general objections with a little more imaginative coloring may be noticed in the hymn beginning,

> "I would not live alway, I ask not to stay
> Where storm after storm rises dark o'er the way ;
> The few lurid mornings that dawn on us here,
> Are enough for life's woes, full enough for its cheer."

Another kind of objection is contained in the following :

> "For what live ever here ?—with laboring step
> To tread our former footsteps ? pace the round
> Eternal ? to climb life's worn, heavy wheel,
> Which draws up nothing new ? to beat and beat
> The beaten track ? to surfeit on the same
> And yawn our joys ?"

[1] Lecky's "History of European Morals."

This apprehension of life-weariness constitutes the lesson to be drawn from Hawthorne's "Septimius Felton," wherein the hero represents to his girl-friend Sybil the beauties and pleasures of a continued life, with the result only of making her feel an intense disgust for the monotony and ennui which she conceived such a life must necessarily induce. The same thought is expressed by Lucretius:

"Why are we then so fond of mortal life
Beset with dangers and maintained with strife?
A life which all our cares can never save;
One fate attends us, and one common grave.
Besides, we tread but a perpetual round;
We ne'er strike out but beat the former ground;
And the same maukish joys in the same track are found.
* * * * * * *
Suppose thou art not broken yet with years,
Yet still the self-same scene of things appears
And would be ever, could'st thou ever live;
For life is still but life, there's nothing new to give." [1]

Suffering, sorrow, and sameness in our experiences are not, as might be supposed, the only objections offered to an existence indefinitely prolonged. Various other reasons have been urged against the desirableness of such a life, either in connection with these objections or independently. Thus says one writer: "Take away from man all that is dependent upon or interlinked with the appointment of death, and it would make such fundamental alterations of his constitution and relations that he would no longer be man. It would leave us almost wholly a

[1] "De Rerum Natura," Lib. III., Dryden's Trans.

different race. If it is a divine boon that men should be, then death is a good to us; for it enables us to be men. Without it there would neither be husband and wife, nor parent and child, nor family hearth and altar; nor indeed would hardly any thing be as it is now." Unless we admit the implication that things are now in their most desirable condition, this argument, it may be remarked, is not a powerful one. The same writer falls into the ordinary line of argument as he continues: "The existent phenomena of nature and the soul would comprise all. And when the jaded individual, having mastered and exhausted this finite sum, looked in vain for any thing new or further, the world would be a hateful dungeon to him and life an awful doom."[1] It is a question whether the individual who should master even this "finite sum" would appear "jaded" or the reverse. The "dying alchemist" is represented by the poet as entertaining a similar thought, though a higher conception of human capabilities.

'Aye—were not man to die
He were too mighty for this narrow sphere!
Had he but time to brood on knowledge here,—
Could he but train his eye,—
Might he but wait the mystic word and hour,
Only his maker would transcend his power!"

By far the greatest number of arguments opposed to a continuous immortality, however, are based on a supposed superiority of a future spiritual life over the present.

A majority of our race do appear to entertain a covert contempt for the present mode of existence and an

[1] Alger: "Critical History of a Future Life."

inconceivable confidence in a future unknown mode. Matter, *per se*, seems to be regarded as of entirely too gross a character to constitute the substance of an endless mode of being. Says a well-known poet :

> "Death is the crown of life !
> Were death denied, poor man would live in vain ;
> Were death denied, to live would not be life.
> Death wounds to cure ; we fall,—we rise,—we reign !
> Spring from our fetters, fasten in the skies,
> Where blooming Eden withers in our sight.
> Death gives us more than was in Eden lost ;—
> This king of terrors is the prince of peace."

Says another writer : "Death, the last and most dreadful of all evils, is so far from being one, that it is the infallible cure for all others—

> "To die is landing on some silent shore,
> Where billows never beat nor tempests roar ;
> Ere well we feel the friendly stroke, 't is o'er.

But was it an evil ever so great, it could not be remedied but by one much greater, which is, by living forever ; by which means our wickedness, unrestrained by the prospect of a future state, would grow so unsupportable, our sufferings so intolerable by perseverance, and our pleasures so tiresome by repetition, that no being in the universe could be so completely miserable as a species of immortal men."

If physical immortality were a reality, it is still a question whether wickedness would not be restrained then, as now, by the knowledge of its own effects resulting from the exercise of moral or physical law ; and a still graver

question whether a *wicked* species of men could by any possibility become *immortal*. The following exhibits the same writer's enthusiasm over the prospect of a *future life*:

"At last death opens to us a new prospect, whence we shall probably look back upon the diversions and occupations of this world with the same contempt we do now on our tops and hobby-horses, and with the same surprise that they could ever so much entertain and engage us."[1]

John Foster, a writer of more than ordinary carefulness and rigor, yet in strict accord with this prevailing order of things, exclaims:

"What a superlatively grand and consoling idea is that of death! Without this radiant idea, this delightful morning-star, indicating that the luminary of Eternity is about to rise, light would darken into midnight melancholy. Oh! the expectation of living *here*, and living *thus*, always would be indeed a prospect of overwhelming despair!"

The citations may be said to fairly represent the mass of literature belonging to the subject; and as such they are separable into two classes of objections: first, those based upon the evils and defects experienced in the present material mode of existence; and secondly, those based upon the supposed superiority of a future spiritual mode of existence.

Though the investigator, be he ever so careful and candid in his work, can not fail to detect a suspicious flavor

[1] Soame Jenyns.

of "sour grapes" pervading all the myths, poetic fancies, and arguments employed against the doctrine of physical immortality, yet this will be found to be not the chief reason for these objections. In order that we may determine this matter definitely, let us notice what the desire for life is.

That aggregation of forces, or division of force in general, which maintains organization is termed vital force. Vital force sustains individual organisms in two ways : by supplying their internal wants, and by protecting them from external injury. The former includes hunger, alimentation, and nutrition ; the latter, the principle of self-protection or self-preservation. Nothing appears to be more closely incorporated with organization and life than this last-named principle. The outer membranes of the lowest and simplest organisms not only serve a formative purpose in giving support and shape to the individual, but in many instances obviously serve to protect the life of the individual from the action of external forces. Nearly all land-plants and the exposed parts of many water-plants have an external layer of tissues, a principal office of which is to prevent the evaporation of moisture from within and thus preserve the life. The thorny armor of many trees and shrubs, the stinging needles of the nettle, and the poisonous exudations of the ivy, upas and other plants specially illustrate this principle of self-preservation among vegetals. Among animals there is found universally the protecting epidermis ; while the electricity of the torpedo, the odor of the skunk, the poison of the asp, the shell of the tortoise, the sepia of

the cuttle-fish, the teeth and claws of the carnivora, the hoofs of the ungulata, and the tusks of the proboscida may serve as special illustrations of the same law. Thus the mole apprehending the descent of the hawk shrinks from destruction ; and the flying-fish takes refuge in the air from the maw of the shark. Still higher exhibitions of the principle are shown in the apparent deliberation and manifest strategy of animals. The cunning of the fox is proverbial ; and it is in the preservation of his own life that this quality is shown in the highest degree. Driven to his hole by the dogs to find a more dreaded enemy there—a man with a gun,—he frequently evades the shot of the sportsman by dashing through thickets and by covering his retreat with trees and fallen timber ; making an extensive circuit he warily approaches the vicinity of his home again ; should he find his human enemy still there, he leaves his habitation forever behind him, and eluding the hounds by doubling, and leaping chasms, and by the most rapid transit of the open country, he endeavors to seek safety and a new abode in some remote section.[1] Hares when pursued by hounds have been known to swim into pools and conceal themselves among the rushes, and at other times to take refuge among sheep. These stratagems are resorted to by the fox also. The roe-deer when pursued, at times doubles on his track, and then halting he makes a prodigious leap to one side and lies flat upon the ground while the hounds go by. It has been observed that crows seldom allow a man with a gun to approach very near to them, while persons

[1] Smellie's "Natural History."

without guns often get within good range. Certain insects, as bees, wasps, and ants, as well as many vertebrates, among which may be mentioned parrots, sea-fowl, sheep, goats, deer, the bison, zebra, horse, elephant, and monkey, display the characteristic of uniting in common defence when attacked. And it is doubtless true, that the gregarious habits generally of many of these animals are the result of the principle of self-preservation. This is confirmed, too, by the precautions many gregarious animals take to prevent surprise. Says Darwin : "Wild horses and cattle do not, I believe, make any danger signal ; but the attitude of any one who first discovers an enemy warns the others. Rabbits stamp loudly on the ground with their hind feet as a signal ; sheep and chamois do the same, but with their fore feet, uttering likewise a whistle. Many birds and some mammals post sentinels, which in case of seals are said generally to be the females. The leader of a troop of monkeys acts as the sentinel, and utters cries expressive both of danger and of safety." In man the principle of self-preservation is displayed in greater degree than by lower organisms ; though it appears to vary greatly with different individuals, as well as with the same individual at different times. Pain and fear in man as in brutes are manifest products of this law. Soldiers bear witness to the fact that excessive weariness, as well as loss of blood, has the effect of destroying both pain and fear. Dr. Livingstone relates that while under the paw of a lion and in danger momentarily of being torn in pieces he experienced an entire want of fear.

In the mere infant the degree in which the principle of self-preservation evidently exists is akin to that exhibited by the lower brute animals. As age increases, the workings of the law are more manifest, until there exists in man a definite desire for life. This desire may be defined as that faculty which appreciates the fact of existence and longs for its continuance. If this faculty be carefully observed, it will be found that in general it is greatest in health and happiness, and weakest in sickness and sorrow; firm in sanity, wavering and fitful in insanity; and in feeble old age constantly decreasing in the energy with which it is manifested.

The inference to be drawn from observing all varieties of animal organization, then, is that the cause of self-preservation, including its highest manifestation, the desire for life, is identical with the cause of life itself, and just in proportion as human life is complete and perfect, in the same degree will this desire be found to be strong and unyielding. Deductively, life, in order to be life, must embody the principle of self-preservation; otherwise, except for indefinitely short periods, there could be no life. Moreover, there is in man no inherent principle warning him that he must die, and this desire being inherent, and thus unrestricted, is necessarily co-extensive with the life which manifests it. And thus it is by a wise provision or a benevolent necessity existing in the nature of things, that he who has but little life desires but little; and he who has more life desires more. The poet's rational expression is:

> "'T is life of which our nerves are scant,
> O life not death for which I pant,
> More life and fuller that I want."

Yet making all allowances for the influence of sorrow, pain, and apathy, it would be a mistake to suppose that these influences alone should ever, in sane human beings, reduce this desire to the point of self-destruction. The poet's logic is quite equal to his verse when he says :

> "Whatever crazy sorrow saith,
> No life that breathes with human breath
> Hath ever truly longed for death."

The desire for life may be said to underlie all other human desires ; the expectation of wealth, aspiration after fame, the unceasing and unsatisfied longing for happiness, all include as a necessity this fundamental principle. To what deeds of valor, to what degree of physical endurance, to what heights of moral sublimity has it not prompted human effort ? And its greatness may be seen in the many and diverse directions of its influence. While it has impelled the ignominious flight of the coward, it has also nerved the warrior's arm to withstand the bloodiest onset. While it has been the parent of the most abject lying, deceit, and treachery, it has, on the other hand, incited men to the most rigid observance of moral precepts. If Paracelsus and Cagliostro by reason of it duped their thousands, from the same source have the philosophers of all ages drawn inspiration and truth for the world's benefit. It has been the parent of adventure and experiment. By reason of it Baron Trencks have undermined the earth like moles and braved the dangers of torture and suffering ; Ponce de Leons have explored new continents ; Tycho Brahes and Theodore Bezas have watched the stars through many

weary years; and Gebers and Lullys and Von Helmonts have gazed, how often with feverish interest, into the bubbling and ever disappointing crucible. Science and civilization in a thousand ways are indebted to it; while so complete and absorbing is its effect upon individual life, that not a feeling or faculty can be regarded as entirely free from its influence.

So profound, in fact, is this element of human nature, and so far-reaching in its application, that it would not be surprising if opinions supposed to be entertained by reason of other influences were found to be really dependent upon this principle as an efficient cause. And such is the fact. Of all the carefully-worded objections ever written against the desirableness of an endless physical life, a majority of these objections, it will be found, have proceeded from the very desire whose influence they have striven to depreciate. The experiences of sorrow and suffering have of course had their influence in the production of that class of objections in which these evils are involved; but they, as efficient causes, tend to deaden the powers and retard the production of thought, while as reasons or illustrations they can only be used, as has been indicated, to show the undesirableness of defective and imperfect life.

The desire for life arising spontaneously in the mind, is, when reduced to terms of force, a simple manifestation of vital force. It is a law of mechanics that a body acted upon by a given force will move in the direction of that force until the given impulse is exhausted. And the same law will be found to apply to the action of this desire.

The simple idea of a continuous, unlimited existence is logically and actually the effect of this force, termed the desire for life. This is illustrated, first, by the exertion made by every person, in normal possession of his powers, to sustain life as long as possible; and secondly, by isolated cases where this simple idea acts unrestrainedly in the mind, as is said to have been the case with an eminent American novelist, and with the poet Cowper, who, in youth, firmly believed that he should never cease to live. And confirmed also by such statements as that of Wm. Hazlitt, "No young man thinks he shall ever die," and of Edward Young, "All men think all men mortal but themselves." Finally, this is shown in the almost universal belief in a future state. A second law of mechanics is, that a body acted upon by two forces takes the direction of their resultant. And thus it is with the mind impelled by the desire for life on the one hand, and met by the apparent inevitableness of death on the other: the resultant is, in most cases a belief in a future state.

The action of this desire to produce this result is subject to modification. Religious training, in most instances, probably so serves to conceal its presence that its possessor remains in entire ignorance of its operation. He becomes so imbued with the doctrines of his particular creed, all of which take the "future life" for granted, that he too comes to regard it as a matter of course. Moreover, he who firmly believes that when he closes his eyes in death it is but to awaken in a brighter, grander world, where he shall possess greater powers, and where the magnificent gifts of earth will dwindle to insignificant baubles,

—such a one will not hesitate to deride the present life even in its most perfect manifestations, as a mockery and a failure. But where do such speculators get their ideas of another life? Has the beautiful region beyond been explored? Has any one the slightest vestige or memento of that undiscovered realm which will bear a moment's scrutiny? Or, are there human kind who, having experienced better modes of life than this, prior to their entrance here, now, like weary travellers surfeited with novel sights and pleasures, scorn the meagre offerings of this world in their eagerness to pass beyond.

We know this life, this world only. It is impossible for us to conceive of any other life differing essentially from this. We may imagine that we long for another life different from this; but it will be purely imagination; we shall simply long for another life like this with certain obnoxious experiences left out. If this life possessed no desirable features, all who had discretion enough to discern that fact would at once become suicides, and by no possibility could we long for another life. Whatever the religion we may entertain,—that religion was originally the product of the thoughts and desires of living men; beliefs in the doctrines of that religion, as well as the doctrines themselves, have been in process of modification since its founding by reason of new discoveries and developments in this world; whatever description that religion may contain of a "future life" is couched in terms of this life; and finally, in many cases our loyalty to the given religion is in the ratio of our ignorance of its dogmas. All of which indicates the spontaneous and human character

of the religious sentiment ; to which immortality, the essential element in every religion, is no exception. Says a recent writer :

" What men love and what they hate has a strong effect upon their beliefs in God and immortality. They like fair-play, therefore they believe God to be just and the rewarder of the just. They like being loved, therefore they believe God to be loving. Or they admire and feel the value of power, therefore they believe God to be almighty. So with immortality and heaven. Life is dear ; so men believe they will live forever. If human nature took a sudden and real aversion to conscious existence, convincing proofs would appear to rise up on every side that the tomb ends all, and the belief in immortality would be obsolete in a week. Here, if anywhere, 'the wish has been father to the thought.' * * * As to the heavens that have been believed in, they have been very many and significantly various. * * And each of these heavens has corresponded exactly with what the men believing in it have been constitutionally disposed to deem desirable, and would have secured to themselves on earth if they could, and which they postpone to the day after death only because they know it to be unattainable, and know too little about death to be sure it will be unattainable then." [1]

It is not a mysterious thing, then, if we are wholly unable to acquire implicit confidence in the reality of that hypothetical future beyond the grave ; for it is beyond our power to put faith in that which we can by no possi-

[1] Miss L. S. Bevington in *Nineteenth Century* for Oct., 1879.

bility conceive of. Wherefore we conclude that the poet's assertion must be a very near approach to the truth :

> " Sure there is none but fears a future state ;
> And when the most obdurate swear they do not,
> Their trembling hearts belie their boasting tongues. "

This should be interpreted to mean that all fear their own theories of the "future life," and not death, because in the latter sense it would be untrue ; thousands of human beings have lived, probably, who have acquired so much of philosophy as to appreciate their own littleness and the greatness of the Power to which they with all things else are subject. And realizing that they came into the world by reason of this same Omnipotence ; that they have constantly been subject to its control, notwithstanding their longings for existence, their confidence in this Power has cast out fear, or their fear has been swallowed up by the acquired contempt for their own insignificance. The Emperor Marcus Aurelius was of the latter class, who wrote the following advice on this subject : "Always observe how ephemeral and worthless human beings are, and what was yesterday a little mucus, to-morrow will be a mummy or ashes. Pass then through this little space of time conformably to nature, and end thy journey in content, just as an olive falls when it is ripe, blessing nature who produced it, thanking the tree on which it grew." [1]

A vastly greater number have met death with equanimity, however, because of their desire for life and the

[1] Thoughts of the Emperor M. Aurelius—iv, 48.

consequent confidence which they came to possess in a "future life." Socrates was of this class, whom Plato represents as saying: "For my part, if I thought I should not find in the other world gods as good and as wise, and men infinitely better than we are here, it would be a piece of injustice in me not to be troubled at death. But be it known to you Simmias, and to you Cebes, that I hope to arrive at the assembly of the just. Indeed, in this point I may flatter myself, but as for finding masters infinitely good and wise, that I can assure you of, as much as things of that nature will bear; and therefore it is, that death is no trouble to me, hoping that there is something reserved for the dead after this life; and that the good meet with better treatment in the world to come than the bad."

That there was something of stoicism in Socrates is evinced in another remark made on the same occasion: "True philosophers make it the whole business of their life-time to learn to die. Now, it is extremely ridiculous for them, after they run out a whole course incessantly, in order to compass that one end, to flinch and be afraid when it comes up to them, when they are just in a capacity of obtaining it after a long and careful search."

But that Socrates' anticipations were gleaned from his experiences here, and consequently based upon his desire for this life, is evident from his account of the "perfect earth above the pure heavens" which he expected to reach. "This earth," he says, "is encircled with gold and silver, which being scattered all over in great abundance, cast forth a charming splendor on all sides. A

sight of this earth is a view of the blessed. It is inhabited by all sorts of animals, and by men. * * * They have sacred groves, and temples actually inhabited by the gods." And so on, in an extended account, does he depict this future world to his friends; which account he does not claim to be at all accurate, for he says: "No man of sense would pretend to assert that these things are exactly as you have heard; but all thinking men will agree that the state of the soul and the place of its abode after death is either such as I represent it to be, or very near like it, provided the soul be immortal; and will certainly find it worth while to run the risk, for what was ever more inviting? One cannot but be charmed with that blessed hope. And for this reason I have thus dwelt upon it."[1] The "blessed hope" of Socrates, it is very evident, is his desire for this life with its defects omitted.

A similar "hope" has inspired the devotees of religion in all ages and climes. Norsemen by reason of the same hope plunged into the battle with the fury of lions; for those who died bravely fighting would be conducted by beautiful white-clad virgins to their god Odin's hall, resplendent Valhalla. The same desire urged on the deadly steel of the Moslem; and his battle-cry to Allah was inspired by ecstatic visions of sparkling fountains, brilliant flowers, fruits, and birds, delightsome music, and the charming presence of dark-eyed houris,—all to be found in that paradise he might win by death. The

[1] From the "Phædon of Plato's Divine Dialogues." Tran. from French edition of M. Dacier.

martyrs of all times have been upheld in enduring the most extreme tortures and sufferings by this same "hope." The early Christians especially illustrate this. There were, it is true, two classes: one that Clemens styles "heretics," and of whom he says: "Some of these show their impiety and cowardice by loving their lives, saying that the knowledge of the really existing God is true testimony (martyrdom), but that a man is a self-murderer who bears witness by his death." Of the other class, Cave in his "Primitive Christianity" says: "They did flock to the place of torment faster than droves of beasts that are driven to the shambles. They even longed to be in the arms of suffering. Ignatius, though then in his journey to Rome in order to his execution, yet by the way as he went could not but vent his passionate desire for it: 'O that I might come to those wild beasts that are prepared for me! I heartily wish that I may presently meet with them; I would invite and encourage them speedily to devour me, and not be afraid to set upon me as they have been to others; nay, should they refuse it, I should even force them to it.' Ignatius had merely accepted one horn of a dilemna by which Paul had acknowledged himself puzzled in considering whether it was better to press on to perfection or to die and be with Christ."

This "hope," or *desire*, has not only impelled and sustained the disciple and follower in religion, but it has been the central idea, the initiatory impulse which underlay the theories and developed the enthusiasm of the great religious leaders and founders. Zoroaster, according to Plutarch, looked forward to the time "when Pluto

shall fail, and mankind shall be happy, and neither need food, nor yield a shadow," to the time when Armanius, Prince of Evil, "must of necessity be himself utterly extinguished and destroyed; at which time, the earth being made plain and level, there will be one life, and one society of mankind made all happy, and one speech."

Buddha, the son of a king, of surpassing beauty of person, and with the pleasures and riches of a regal court at his command, becomes filled with sorrow at beholding a tottering old man; the sight of disease is a source of pain to him; and the loathsome spectacle of a dead body causes him to renounce a princely career, and to spend his years in considering the problem of human life. His third "Great Truth" is, "That there is no escape from existence except by destruction of desire"; and his dying words, referring to the same subject, were: "Beloved, that which causes life, causes also decay and death. Never forget this; let your minds be filled with this truth. I called you to make it known to you."[1]

During five years preceding his active career, Mohammed was accustomed frequently to retire to a cavern on Mt. Hira, and engage in long and solitary broodings on the phenomena of life and death, and the nature of evil and God; till, as a result of his meditations, he concludes that escape from the punishments of hell and the inheritance of an everlasting life are to be attained by means chiefly of prayer, fasting, and alms-giving.

And if there should be those who question the consistency of a divine sacrifice, to appease the infinite wrath

[1] Encyc. Brit., IX edition, Article, Buddhism.

of God because of defects existing in his own creatures, none can deny that the desire for life may have been adequate even in a man, to cause him to endure all reproaches and disgrace, if it should be found that he supposed thereby he might be not merely the gainer himself, but savior of his fellow-men.

There is another phase of this subject which needs to be considered, and that is, how far and in what way does this desire for life tend to demonstrate human immortality? It has been a favorite argument with some of the ablest philosophers and theologians since Plato's time, that the instinctive desire in man for existence is indicative of a want, just as hunger indicates a want, and which, like hunger, it is fair to suppose has provision made by the power controlling the universe for its satisfaction. The argument is stated as follows by an eminent writer: "There is in man an instinctive feeling of immortality. This shows itself exactly as all the other instincts show themselves. Men, in all ages, countries, nations, races, have believed in a 'future life'; but they have had very different notions about the 'future life.' * * * This I think proves the existence in man of *an instinct* of immortality; for it has all the attributes of an instinct. It is universal,—appearing in all races and times. It is involuntary,—coming up of itself before any instruction. It is constant,—never disappearing from human consciousness however much it may be modified therein. It is active and operative,—showing itself as a feeling, a longing after immortality; as a belief in some kind of immortality; and an action leading to certain religious practice

in relation to immortality, wherein every one is conscious of this instinct in himself. We all, in our desires and thoughts, reach forward beyond death; we imagine ourselves as present *in this life* after we die, and as always existing somewhere. It is impossible to realize the end of our own consciousness. If we try to imagine ourselves as annihilated, we also imagine ourselves as looking on, and seeing ourselves annihilated."[1]

It will need no argument to prove that the instinct of immortality and the desire for life are one and the same thing; since the desire for life must evidently precede the desire for endless life, and since the latter includes the former. This principle must not, however, be mistaken for a mere wish. Says the writer already quoted: "The argument is not that because we wish for a thing, we shall certainly have it; but it is this: Whenever God places an instinctive tendency in his creatures, universal, constant, permanent, he provides something which corresponds in reality and fact to that tendency."

This is undoubtedly a strong argument for immortality, supported as it is by the entire emotional nature. Said Lord Byron, by no means a religious enthusiast: "I feel my immortality oversweep all pains, all tears, all time, all fears; and peal, like the eternal thunders of the deep, into my ears this truth,—thou livest forever!"

Accepting the conclusion, then, that man is immortal, is there any thing in the nature of the *instinct* or *desire* on which we base this immortality from which we can determine its kind or nature? When a man sinks into

[1] "The Hour Which Cometh" (Chap. XIX), Jas. Freeman Clark.

a lethargy and remains unconscious, barely manifesting vegetative life for weeks, and then dies, shall we conclude that his clogged intellect at the moment of dissolution suddenly acquires normal power? or, indeed, more than normal power, so that it is enabled without eyes to see, without ears to hear, without nerves to feel, and without a brain to think? Having started on a logical basis shall we at once become illogical? If there were no other mode of immortality conceivable we should be forced to do this. But it were better for us to class ourselves with the Psychopannychians and encounter all the terrors of attempting to pronounce the word, than thus to sacrifice our reason and the laws of logic at the first step. If immortality is the logical sequence of the desire for life, it must by the same rule be of a kind corresponding to the nature of the life desired, *i. e*, to this life minus its defects. In accepting this conclusion, though grave difficulties be met, they need not frighten us. No difficulty could be proposed greater than the first difficulty in the way of conceiving of a future "spiritual" mode of being. No difficulty greater than conceiving of a man dead as yet alive. Says Prof. Bain: "It is now often said that *the mind and body act upon each other;* that neither is allowed, so to speak, to pursue its course alone; there is a constant interference, a mutual influence between the two. This view is liable to the following objections:—

"In the first place, it assumes that we are entitled to speak of mind apart from body, and to affirm its powers and properties in that separate capacity. But of mind apart from body we have no direct experience, and abso-

lutely no knowledge. The wind may act upon the sea, and the waves may react upon the wind ; yet the agents are known in separation, they are seen to exist apart before the shock of collision : but we are not allowed to perceive a mind acting apart from its material companion.

"In the second place, we have every reason for believing that there is, in company with all our mental processes *an unbroken material succession.* From the ingress of a sensation to the outgoing responses in action, the mental succession is not for an instant dissevered from a physical succession. * * * While we go the round of the mental circle of sensation, emotion, and thought, there is an unbroken physical circle of effects. It would be incompatible with every thing we know of the cerebral action, to suppose that the physical chain ends abruptly in a physical void, occupied by an immaterial substance; which immaterial substance, after working alone, imparts its results to the other edge of the physical break, and determines the active response—two shores of the material with an intervening ocean of the immaterial. There is, in fact, no rupture of nervous continuity.

"The same line of criticism applies to another phrase in common use, namely, 'The mind uses the body as its *instrument*,' or medium of operating on the external world. This also assumes for mind a separate existence, a power of living apart, an option of working with or without a body. Actuated by the desire of making itself known, and of playing a part in the sphere of matter, the mind uses its bodily ally to gratify this desire ; but if it chose to

be self-contained, to live satisfied with its own contemplations, like the gods as conceived by Aristotle, it need not enter into co-operation with any physical process, with brain, senses, or muscular organs. I will not reiterate the groundlessness of this supposition. The physical alliance is the very law of our mental being ; it is not contrived purely for the purpose of making our mental states known ; without it we should not have mental states at all." [1]

But why should we despond if we find that to exist at all it is necessary to have a body as well as mind? The possibilities of this life are wholly unknown. The potentialities of this organism called man we know little about. The universe is made of a texture so refined, and possesses proportions so comprehensive, as to more than satisfy any yearnings for a theoretical heaven. And if these yearnings mean any thing, they serve to show that an endless life on the basis of a physical existence is possible. If, however, any should question the proposition that an endless life is possible because it is desirable, they cannot deny that if such a life were possible it would certainly be desirable.

[1] "Mind and Body," (pp. 130–1–3).

CHAPTER IV.

THE EVIDENCE FROM POSITIVISM.

The Positivist's Ground—The Same Premise but a Different Conclusion—The Body not a Machine—Death and Ignorance—Life's Differential—Studies—Retarding Causes—Philosophy of a Human Being—Development and Reproduction Antagonistic—Facts.

FROM this stand-point there is no other mode of immortality conceivable or possible to man as now constituted. Says Edward Harrison, speaking of the future life: "There is no promise, be it plainly said, of any thing but an immortality of influences, of spiritual work, of glorified activity. * * * We say the immaterial entity (the soul) is something which we cannot grasp, which explains nothing, for which we cannot have a shadow of evidence. We are determined to treat man as a human organism, just as we treat a dog as a canine organism; and we know no ground for saying, and no good to be got by pretending, that man is a human organism *plus* an indescribable entity. We say the human organism is a marvellous thing, sublime, if you will, of subtilest faculty and sensibility; but we, at any rate, can find nothing in man which is not an organic part of this organism; we find the faculties of mind, feeling, and will directly dependent on physical organs; and to talk to us of mind, feeling, and will continuing their functions in the absence of physical organs and visible organisms, is to use language which, to us at

least, is pure nonsense. And now to turn to the great phenomenon of material organisms which we call Death. The human organism, like every other organism, ultimately loses that stable equilibrium of its correlated forces, which we call Life, and ceases to be an organism or system of organs, adjusting its internal relations to its external conditions. Thereupon the existence of the complex independent entity, to which we attribute consciousness undoubtedly—*i. e.*, for aught we know to the contrary—comes to an end. * * * We have not the slightest reason to suppose that the consciousness of the organism continues, for we mean by consciousness, the sum of sensations of a particular organism, and the particular organism being dissolved, we have nothing left whereto to attribute consciousness."

Positivism regards humanity as the crew of a sailing vessel which never reaches port. Each sailor performs his duty, helps to instruct the new crew of descendants in the performance of similar duties, and then drops into the sea. Accepting the same premises, the question will be considered whether the ship must not ultimately make a harbor—whether at some time near or remote, man will not obtain the power of an endless life; or, at least, whether such a result is not warranted by the facts, and therefore a possibility.

The human organism, to the extent it is now understood, affords the first and perhaps most convincing argument in support of this claim. Human organic life manifests itself in alternate movements of building up and tearing down, of repair and decay, of life and death;

and why in intelligent human beings the ratio of upbuilding forces should ever fall below the ratio of destructive forces is a question.

Says William Ware: "When apart from the associations of experience we think of the human body in the full activity of its functions, and supplied with all that is necessary to their performance, we can see no reason why it should not exist and act forever. * * * We are not governed or repaired like machines; we do not come to an end like them. If, indeed, every part of a machine were repaired as fast as it gives way; if it were moved by a power which is the result of its own activity, its similarity to a living body would be more complete, and we can see no reason why either should cease to exist and to move." "Of violent or accidental destruction from external causes we cannot conceive, as of the disintegration of a rock, or the solution of a crystal; but, in these cases, we know that no power proper to the existence of the object has been destroyed, whereas, of natural dissolution, involving the extinction of the power which has kept up the organization, we can form no definite idea."[1] The writer does not mean, of course, the utter "*extinction* of the power which has kept up the organization" save as *related* to that organization. By the law of the correlation of forces, the power which controls organization and life cannot be destroyed; it may assume another form, as light, heat, or electricity, but it never becomes extinct. Its sources are exhaustless, and its continuance is as infinite as its extent. The answer to the question, then,

[1] Smellie's "Philosophy of Natural History."

why death ever ensues as the result of decay in human life, must be found in our ignorance of the forces which constitute life, or our inability to control these forces to our own permanent betterment.

Vegetals, brutes, barbarians, and civilized men, while they possess life of the same *kind*, manifest differences in the *degree* of that life in proportion as they approximate to, or manifest *mind*. Why an annual plant dies is comparatively plain ; because the plant is a passive object having no power of controlling or modifying the forces which act upon it. And since the destructive forces at a certain period in the plant's growth become greater than the creative, the plant dies. The death of brutes and savages, for a similar reason, is not, comparatively speaking, mysterious. But death in intelligent organisms, it is evident, can only result when the intelligence is not sufficient to control the antecedent forces.

Says Herbert Spencer: " Death by natual decay occurs, because in old age the relations between assimilation, oxidation, and genesis of force going on in the organism gradually fall out of correspondence with the relations between oxygen and food and absorption of heat by the environment. Death from disease arises either when the organism is congenitally defective in its power to balance the ordinary external actions by the ordinary internal actions, or when there has taken place some unusual external action. Death by accident implies some neighboring mechanical changes of which the causes are either unobserved from inattention or are so intricate that their results cannot be foreseen ; and consequently certain relations

in the organism are not adjusted to the relations in the environment. Manifestly, if to every outer co-existence and sequence by which it was ever in any degree affected the organism presented an answering process or act, the simultaneous changes would be indefinitely numerous and complex, and the successive ones endless—the correspondence would be the greatest conceivable, and the life the highest conceivable, both in degree and in length."

The mystery of death produced by decay or disease does not appear to lie so much in the immediate fact, as in that antecedent cause by which those internal relations constituting life are gradually weakened. Molecular death is a constant factor and evidently a necessity of life. From the moment of conception the individual increases in power to withstand external forces, through the constant elimination and renovation of molecules. This continues usually, to all appearance, far past the period of adult age. Why there should come a period when this ratio of internal to external adjustment should so far decrease as to permit the destruction of the individual, is the question. Why should not the human body constantly and continuously increase in its power to withstand and control external influences? That a period does come, when the power of internal adjustment, as related to external change, so far decreases as to permit the destruction of the individual, is not in theory at least an insurmountable difficulty. For the reason that the more prominent causes which tend to bring about this state of things may be discerned. If life is the constant balance of accounts in the human economy, and death a state of

insolvency, there is no good reason why the unprofitable investments and bad debts which tend to this end should not be detected. And the causes which tend toward bankruptcy are precisely the same in kind if not in degree as those which finally effect it. Each individual has, therefore, in his own past life, an opportunity to study the causes which tend toward his own dissolution, and to provide suitable means for averting and controlling them.

But of more importance than all this is the fact that each individual has the opportunity to study the character and sources of organic power in his own person, and to determine a method by which this power may be augmented. If man could avoid all accidents, if he possessed infallible remedies for every form of disease, he still would be subject to

"The silver livery of advised age";

and the study of medicines and disease, therefore, though of value, cannot be the chief aim of the investigator in this field. His researches must include, first of all, a study of the laws and forces of inorganic nature, since to these laws all organic life is constantly subject. The phenomena manifested by the lowest and simplest organisms will properly claim his attention next, because the laws which control the simplest, are also discernible in the most complex forms. The anatomy and physiology of brutes and man, and the phenomena of nerve action, sensation, instinct, and mind, will follow. Finally, social influences and all peculiar and abnormal penomena relating to life must be considered, and their bearings upon and relation to, human life taken into account.

On the supposition that a continuous life could be attained and the natural tendency to dissolution overcome, a great number of causes can be cited which now appear to prevent this result. There is unquestionably an extended net-work of influences dragging man downward and earthward : The impress of personal experience which constantly reminds him that all men die ; the imperious demand of personal needs, which allow no time for investigations that are not productive of "bread and butter"; the disheartening influence of defeat and failure, which create apathy and indifference for life itself ; and the influence of that religious belief which authoritatively asserts, Dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return !

Besides these social forces the most potent cause remains, that each one is ignorant of his own physical nature.

Specifically, this ignorance is referable chiefly to two laws : the one, alluded to already, by which individual life is developed ; the other, the law by which the race is perpetuated. The philosophy of a human being, so far as understood, may be summarized as follows : Man, like other organisms, develops from a germ, through the force derived from his food and the atmosphere. As a particle of iron brought within the attraction of a magnet is affected, so the specialized tissues known as germ and sperm severally seem to bear the impress of the parent organism, though in a more exact and special way than the iron. A condition of inequality being induced by the union of the two, just as a mass of matter, falling or impinging upon another, forces it into a new position, so the

human germ divides and subdivides, and in accordance with the law, that a body acted upon by a given force follows the line of least resistence, so the particles and parts of a human being, a continued series of inequalities being set up, tend to rearrange themselves, similar to the parent organisms, the process being modified, of course, by all other forces to which the new organism is subject. Bones, muscles, and nerves develop, each with some special function. In all the higher types, the degree of intelligence or mind is dependent upon the amount, proportion, and arrangement of nerve substance. Along with the power of movement in organized nerve substance, develops constantly a subjective phase which we experience as feeling and thought. When man, like other organisms, has reached a point where the external forces of atmospheric pressure, gravity, etc., balance the internal forces, growth ceases. Quite naturally the inflowing forces then act to affect the organism internally, and the law by which the race is perpetuated begins to assert its sway.

The Egyptians held, according to Wilkinson, that dissolution is the cause of reproduction. From the standpoint of positivism, the converse of this proposition would appear to be more exactly true, namely : that, in general, reproduction is the efficient cause of dissolution. A great number of facts could be cited in support of this view.

In many classes of organisms, new individuals are directly developed by the destruction of the old : among unicellular types the old separate into parts to form two or more new individuals, as in Paramecium ; in other low

types, the new form within the old and burst it asunder, as in the Volvox; in others, a budding process develops the new at the expense of the old, as in Hydrozoa. The aloe plant is an example, which after accumulating force for a century, expends all in the development of its blossom, and in blooming dies. May-flies exist, in the larval and nymphal stages, beneath the surface of water for several years, but appear in the winged state only for a day, to reproduce their kind and die. "This is strikingly exhibited," says Nicholson, speaking of the destructive character of sexual reproduction, "in the majority of insects, which pass the greater portion of their existence in a sexually immature condition, and die almost immediately after they have become sexually perfect, and have consummated the act whereby the perpetuation of the species is secured."[1] Death occurs at times among the higher types, similarly, though not usually; yet the same principle prevails throughout all organic nature, and man is no exception to the general law. "Genesis under every form," says Spencer, "is a process of negative or positive disintegration"; and hence, as Dr. Carpenter affirms, "the development of the individual and the reproduction of the species stand in an inverse ratio to each other." That man should be amenable to this law, with the simplest organism, is inferable from the fact that man is but an organized mass of simple cells, and may be regarded as developed from the simplest organism through an indefinite number of gradations.

All higher organisms seem to be the result of a plan—

[1] "Study of Biology."

nature's invention—by which the production of new cells at the expense of the old contributes to the development of the individual organism. In this view, all organic growth may be regarded as a process identical with agamic reproduction ; and certain it is that as soon as the "point of nutritional equilibrium" is reached, the law controlling reproduction begins to be apparent. Says Nicholson : "If we regard the asexual methods of reproduction as being merely forms of growth, we can readily understand how it is that zooidal multiplication generally excludes reproduction for a time. The time, however, ultimately comes in the life of all organisms, when multiplication by gemmation and fission becomes insufficient, when it becomes necessary that the essential elements of reproduction should be produced. The additional tax thus imposed upon the organism is usually borne without injury for a certain length of time ; but the losses thus caused, if slow, are sure, and in some cases so great as to end in the immediate destruction of the organism."

Why this law is not so immediate in its workings, among higher types, is doubtless due to the fact that the reproductive function is specialized and its effects are not felt to the same extent in all parts of the organism, so that the reparative powers for a time successively withstand the destructive. But as every repeated action tends to alter the organism to correspond with such action, and to fix habits by which the psychical conditions the more readily conform to such performance, the result in every case is the same. As it will not take a very acute logician to infer that life can only be produced at the expense of

life, so it will not need a very keen observer to detect the fact that the most intense physical and mental excitation can only result in a corresponding degree of disintegration and depression, the continuance of which must finally result in dissolution.

Let us not be misunderstood. Failure to reproduce their kind, simply, could be of no advantage to any class of beings, as the history of celibacy, of the fanatical type, undoubtedly proves ; but that individual progress and culture must depend upon utilizing those forces closely interwoven with the organism which the law of race development destroys, is supported by such facts as the following :

1. Organisms in general attain their greatest perfection at the period when the law of race begins to act and the upbuilding forces are not yet encroached upon.

2. Heredity, as evinced in the minute resemblances of offspring to parents, proves the vicarious character of the reproductive function and its consequent effect on every part of the parent organism.

3. The chemical composition of nerve substance, which in higher animals is always correlated with psychical power, is nearly the same as of that expended in procreation.

4. Wherever early or unrestricted cohabitation prevails, progress is a minus quantity.

5. The most exalted human efforts have been dependent upon the control of sexual desire ; the names of Newton, Kant, Humboldt, Grimm, Irving, and many others, will suggest the evidence.

6. The existence of such qualities as modesty, fear, secrecy, shame, etc., as referring to this particular function, whether their origin be instinctive or acquired, points to a tacit acknowledgment of the deteriorating influence on the individual of the reproductive function.

CHAPTER V.

IS THERE AN UNKNOWN FORCE?

Great and Small Streams—The Physical Forces not Life—An Unexplored Venice—The Subjective Side of Force—Swedenborg's Vision—Mesmerism—Expectancy not Sufficient—Percentage of Fraud—Hamlet—Billiard Balls—The Leverage of Descent—A Human Porcupine—Harmonious Growth.

THERE is an actual stream of life, the sources of which exist in the food and air that each individual consumes. This stream, which is but a minute diversion from the majestic ocean-current of existence, is not less wonderful than the continuous but diversified movement of that mightiest river itself. The processes by which matter possessing quite dissimilar properties is converted into the substance of the body are but partially understood. Says Nicholson: "In plants, as in animals, the vital processes are carried on by forces which we cannot as yet refer to known chemical and physical forces, and which, therefore, we are in the meanwhile compelled to speak of as 'vital.'" That chemical action, heat, light, and electricity are all necessary to the maintenance of life, is known; but it is not known that these forces alone constitute life.

Physiologists and biologists who know the most about human life, best recognize how much yet remains to be discovered. That assumptions pass for knowledge in this field, is illustrated not infrequently in post-mortem exam-

inations, and in the fact that aphorisms of the schools are by certain phenomena set at defiance. To live without air and food is by the authorities regarded as impossible, yet some of the fakirs of India allow themselves to be buried up in the ground, in sealed coffins, and wheat sowed above their tombs. After a period of some weeks they are exhumed and resuscitated, to all appearance none the worse for their protracted slumbers.[1] It is not wonderful, then, that ignorance should exist with regard to the life-forces and -processes.

[1] Carpenter's Physiology, page 868, foot-note. "See a collection of these cases, directly obtained from British officers who had been eye-witnesses of them in India, by Mr. Braid, in his 'Observations on Trance, or Human Hybernation,' 1850. In one of these, vouched for by Sir Claude M. Wade (formerly political agent at the Court of Runjeet Singh), the fakir was buried in an underground cell, under strict guardianship, for *six weeks;* the body had been twice dug up by Runjeet Singh during the period of interment, and had been found in the same position as when first buried. In another case narrated by Lieutenant Boileau, in his 'Narrative of a Journey in Rajwarra, in 1835,' the man had been buried for ten days, in a grave lined with masonry and covered with large slabs of stone, and strictly guarded; and he assured Lieutenant B. that he was ready to submit to an interment of twelve-months' duration, if desired. In a third case narrated by Mr. Braid, the trial was made under the direct superintendence of a British officer, a period of nine days having been stipulated for on the part of the devotee; but this was shortened to three at the desire of the officer, who feared lest he should incur blame if the result was fatal. The appearance of the body when first disinterred is described in all instances as having been quite corpse-like and no pulsation could be detected at the heart or in the arteries; the means of restoration employed were chiefly warmth to the vertex, and friction to the body and limbs. It may be remarked that the possibility of the protraction of such a state (supposing that no deception vitiates the authenticity of the narrative referred to) can be much better comprehended as occurring in India, than as taking place in this country; since the warmth of the tropical atmosphere and soil would prevent any serious loss of heat, such as must soon occur in a colder climate, when the processes whereby it is generated are brought to a stand."

The food, after being poured into the blood in that milky condition known as chyle, is almost immediately forced by the action of the central engine, the heart, through the millions of minute screens which make up the lungs, and is thus cleansed from much of its impurity and highly oxygenized. As true blood it now begins its circuit. The body may be regarded as an organic Venice, whose canals—veins, arteries and capillaries—not only receive the waste and wash of the city, but contain every thing needful to supply the inhabitants. The arrangements and regulations of the corporation are very complete. An environing ocean, the skin, constantly conveys away one form of impurity, while an extensive arrangement of sieves and screens, the kidneys, eliminates another form from the fluid supply. Millions of minute gondolas, the blood corpuscles, with crimson banners, pass and repass. Occasionally a white streamer marks the passage of a new vessel just from the central factory, the liver. The latter, though it is known to return some of its waste product, the bile, by a circuitous course into the common current, and also to produce much of the sugar found in this wonderful stream, is to a considerable extent a mystery. The office of a neighboring structure, the spleen, is still more mysterious. In fact, there is mystery attendant upon most of the operations which go on here. There is a series of smaller drains, called lymphatics, which are supposed to convey the surplus fluids from local reservoirs back to the main channels; their office, however, is not fully understood. A uniform temperature of 98½° is sustained; just how is not clear. As-

similation, the process by which all the repairs are made, is not well understood. But perhaps the most mysterious of all the operations of the human body is that manifested in feeling and mind, as coexisting with nerve movement.

"The soul of things,
The life that haunts us with imaginings,
That lives, breathes, throbs in all we hear or see,
The charm, the secret hidden everywhere
Evades all reason, spurns philosophy,
And scorns by boasting science to be tracked.
Hunt as we will all matter to the end,
Life flits before it; last, as first, we find
Naught but dead structure and the dust of fact;
The infinite gap we cannot apprehend,
The somewhat that is life—the informing mind." [1]

Psychologists have proven the close connection between all forms of consciousness and nerve excitation; have even traced correspondences between complex psychical phenomena and minute sub-divisions of the nervous system. But none have shown why movement in nerve substance possesses a subjective phase. If all forms of molecular movement had a subjective side, the difficulty would be lessened. To be sure, our knowledge of heat, electricity, and light is very limited; and it may be true that every movement in nature and existence has a subjective side, of which man ordinarily cannot be cognizant.

Prof. Geo. F. Barker has shown very conclusively, by the experimental method, that thought and feeling are

[1] In the glen at Vallombrosa.—*Story.*

correlated with heat and electricity. Correlation implies sameness in the essentials. If emotion indicates the presence of electricity, conversely electricity, as well as objective force generally, may indicate the presence of something corresponding to what we term emotion or thought.

There are certain recorded phenomena, as well authenticated as any history can be, which would indicate, if true, something of this sort. Emmanuel Kant, whose reputation for accuracy and honesty is unquestioned, and who asserts that "the inhabitants of a whole city, of whom the greater portion are still alive [August, 1758], were witnesses of the fact, and concur in bearing testimony to the memorable occurrence," narrates the following of Swedenborg:

"In the year 1756, when Swedenborg, toward the end of September, on Saturday, at four o'clock P.M., arrived at Gothenburg, from England, Mr. William Castel invited him to his house, together with a party of fifteen persons. About six o'clock Swedenborg went out, and after a short interval returned to the company, quite pale and alarmed. He said that a dangerous fire had just broken out in Stockholm, at the Sundermalm, (Gothenburg is about three hundred English miles from Stockholm,) and that it was spreading very fast. He was restless, and went out very often. He said that the house of one of his friends, whom he named, was already in ashes, and that his own was in danger. At eight o'clock, after he had been out again, he joyfully exclaimed: 'Thank God! the fire is extinguished the third door

from my house.' This news occasioned great commotion throughout the whole city, and particularly among the company in which he was. It was announced the same evening to the governor. On Sunday morning Swedenborg was sent for by the governor, who questioned him concerning the disaster. Swedenborg described the fire precisely, how it had begun, in what manner it ceased, and how long it had continued. On the same day the news spread through the city, for the governor had thought it worthy of attention. On Monday evening a messenger arrived at Gothenburg, who was despatched during the time of the fire. In the letters brought by him, the fire was described precisely in the manner stated by Swedenborg. On Tuesday morning the royal courier arrived at the governor's with the sad intelligence of the fire, confirming all the particulars given by Swedenborg immediately after it had ceased, for the fire was extinguished at eight o'clock." If we accept this account as true, it may best be explained, as already said, on the supposition that all molecular movement has attached to itself, were we able to recognize the fact, a subjective phase, which Swedenborg, in this particular instance and in some other instances during his life, was enabled, because of his peculiar psychical development, to perceive.

The existence of a universal ether, filling all space, and the interstices of all bodies,—a necessary hypothesis in science,—has a significance. It is probable that this ether is but an attenuated form of ordinary matter, and extremely sensitive to the impact of any force ; being con-

stantly affected by the properties of denser bodies with which it comes in contact. Admitting this, and we must recognize as a verity the "nerve atmosphere," of which George Crooke, the English mathematician wrote, "surrounding every person, and affecting the atmosphere of every other person and thing." If under any conditions the will could have power to induce molecular movement in this atmosphere, there is reason to believe that the "psychic force," which the eminent chemist, Wm. Crooks, claims to have discovered, is also a verity. If so, much light would be thrown on the subject of mesmerism, hypnotism, clairvoyance, and spiritualism.

Dr. Wm. B. Carpenter, in his discussion of these subjects, cites instances where mesmerized patients had their limbs amputated without realizing any pain ; and yet explains the phenomena on the hypothesis of "expectancy" on the part of the patients. With all deference to so eminent an authority, this theory seems to conflict even with his own reasoning. In the same treatise he attempts to demonstrate that the will of every individual is free ; and certainly free will would never submit to having a needle thrust deeply under the finger nail, or to having the hand held in a flame, unless for the American Indian's reason, to show powers of endurance. While if the will is not free, it seems to be useless to talk of "subjugating the mind to a dominant idea," unless done by some outside force. There seems to be a positive and wonderful influence exerted at times, in some way related to the psychical nature of the operator. Admitting that ninety-nine per cent. of the marvels of mesmerism, clairvoy-

ance, spiritualism, etc., are best explained by intentional fraud, self-deception, imperfect perception, or imagination, who shall say that the remaining one per cent. may not be due to some unknown force? Indeed, if we would escape from the charge of inordinate egotism, we must conclude with Hamlet, that

> "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
> Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

The power said to have been exerted by Greatrakes, Gassner, Puysegur, and others, for healing disease, may not have been different in kind from that exemplified in personal influence generally. But the peculiar fascination of the mistress for her lover, the sway which the orator exerts over his auditors, to make them weep or laugh according to his will, are in themselves wonderful; and if such power admits of being greatly augumented it may take on very surprising attributes. Suppose Mesmer did claim to have "*magnetized the sun!*" it only proves the remarkable faith he had in his own power, since he is not accused of having been a madman.

Quite ordinary phenomena seem to indicate that the will of an individual does at times affect the ether or nerve atmosphere about him. "Speak of the deil and he 's always nigh," and "Coming events cast their shadows before," may be converse propositions. The horse is careful of his timid rider, and the dog feels the frowning spirit of his master. When aroused or excited, the will-power of an individual is visibly increased. An expert billiard-player pitted against an antagonist, evinces his

will seemingly not only in delicacy of touch and control of his cue, but upon the balls themselves as they roll. That such influence, if it exists, depends upon the physical condition of the person using it, is reasonable ; and it is also apparent why it is not usually manifested. The stream of individual life continues closely under the control of hereditary influences, from the cradle to the grave. Even after growth ceases and the law of race asserts its sway, the surplus energy not absorbed in the ordinary occupations is usually dissipated under this second law. Moulded simply by the action and reaction of balanced forces, directed by the leverage of descent into ancestral lines, physiologically, psychologically, and too frequently pathologically, the organism can gain but little. The nervous system, like other parts, is enlarged through alternate states of exercise and rest. The quality of the work is an important factor however. A person engaged for a lifetime in purely intellectual pursuits, may be increasing constantly in the aggregate amount of nerve substance, and yet gain little or nothing in real power. In fact he may merely exemplify the condition of *brains overmuch*, and like the great Scaliger, come to be regarded as a pedantic human porcupine. But when these inflowing forces are controlled to the harmonious growth and refinement of the psychical nature, it is reasonable to believe that there is a peculiar force developed, whose properties are for the most part unknown. This receives confirmation from the precepts of Puysegur, which he cites in his "Memoirs" as warranting success in dunamizing: "*Active will to do good—Firm belief in one's own power—Entire confidence in its use.*"

The conditions on which such power, if it exists, depends, are doubtless transmitted as other physical traits are transmitted; and an individual may be surprised at some period of life to find himself manifesting a peculiar energy. Says the learned Bishop of Derry, George Rust: "Greatrakes would sometimes wonder at his power, and doubted at first whether he was not deceiving himself on its extent. But he was fully convinced that it was a particular favor which he had received, and hence he devoted himself entirely to the cure of patients." That care and caution need to be exercised in the determination of this matter, is doubtless true; but that the human organism—never yet *perfectly* developed, never yet understood—may, in its possible attainments, manifest powers of the most wonderful character, none can deny.

HAPTER V

WILL RIGHT LIVING LEAD TO PERFECTION?

Weeds—An Unexplored Sea—Various Lacks—Knowledge as a Solvent—The Antidote—The Dice of God—Standards—Positive Difficulties—Shakerism and Fourierism—A Higher Function—The Proof—A Mohammedan Paradise—"The Choir Invisible"—Fanaticism—The Monastic View—A Contrast—Weaknesses—Woman—The Key to Heaven—Children.

NO one can give a decisive answer to this question, because no one is prepared to say that he has tried the experiment. Ethics cannot be regarded as actually a barren field, yet it seems to be filled largely with mediocre products and very many weeds. The virtues of its soil for various reasons are allowed to remain untested. Of those who understand the location of this soil, many are doubtless ignorant of the conditions under which it will yield a crop, while a greater number may be indifferent to all projects to cultivate it. Right living is not unlike discovering the "open Polar Sea," which Arctic explorers believe to exist, but which, encased in its barriers of pure ice, may require to warrant complete success, the endurance of a most extraordinary temperature. Whatever morality may be, we must regard the lack of results in this direction as due to certain other lacks on the part of mankind generally.

The first of these we enumerate is the lack of faith in human destiny. This lack is not limited to the latitudes of atheism, positivism, or skepticism of any sort, but will be found to prevail extensively in the environments of decaying church creeds, among the paralytics of overthrown doctrines, and in the bedridden wards of professed believers. There is no mistaking that to-day an extensive defection exists in the ranks of the faithful, and a growing indifference to the claims of a future life. Should we attempt to investigate the cause of this, the situation will not be found so entirely hopeless as might at first be supposed ; for we shall doubtless discover that the cause which has tended more than any other to bring this state of things about, has been the increase of knowledge, which, flooding the common level, has acted as a solvent on many cherished beliefs. Instead of finding his treasures to consist of enduring substance, the amazed owner, in many instances, discovers them to have entirely dissolved in the mixture which he himself has helped to compound. The spell broken, the believer may find that he has been including in his faith, matters quite on a par with other things which he always regarded as absurd, or, he may find that what he really thought himself to believe, does not admit of belief. And though all instances are to be deplored where the strength of the old bonds is such that when broken asunder the adherent is plunged into a gulf of utter despondency, or forced to wander aimlessly on the plains of unbelief, yet true wisdom always offers an antidote for the wound it inflicts, and must prove, sooner or later, beneficial.

Faithlessness in man's physical nature prevails. If the human body increases in power according to a fixed law, it would seem to be of considerable importance that that law be recognized and conformed to. As an old writer remarks: "Too often we are weak because it never enters into our thoughts that we might be strong if we would." If it be possible to attain the power of an endless life, doubtless such a result could only be secured as liberty in a State is secured, by "eternal vigilance"; not so much in regard to details perhaps as to general principles. While owing to our blindness and the intricacies of the road we travel, this may be impossible at present, we should at least avail ourselves of the light we have. Too frequently, doubtless, we imitate the customs of the Roman emperors, and the body is made a coliseum of delights, where appetite and passion contend to the debasement and destruction of the life within. St. Paul had such an exalted idea of the human body as to style it "the temple of God," and of those professing belief in the infallible inspiration of the Scriptures, how many could fearlessly receive the statement: "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are"? And where among those professing no such belief shall we look for a higher standard or more exalted results?

Faithlessness in the universe is another form. The misunderstood utterances of Spencer, Huxley, and some other leaders in philosophy and science, have doubtless caused something of this,—*misunderstood utterances*, because these men do not deny the existence of an over-

ruling Intelligence, but merely assert that the Unknown Cause may be something vastly higher than any thing with which we can compare it. Man's oldest enemy, ignorance, must be held chiefly responsible for this special defect. Man as ever distrusts what he cannot understand. When he observes fraud to succeed where integrity is set aside ; when he discovers pretence to count for more than unquestioned merit, he is quite likely to query whether, after all, the assertions that truth must prevail and justice triumph are not cant utterances to catch the unwary ; and whether the natural promptings of selfishness should not be allowed free scope—except that for the sake of appearances their workings be discreetly hidden. Man's origin and much of his career are against his holding right views on this point. Only an Emerson, probably, can pass fearlessly along, believing that "Every secret is told, every crime is punished, every virtue rewarded, every wrong redressed in silence and certainty"; only a Carlyle feel confident that "There is a Godlike in all human affairs ; that God not only made us and beholds us, but is in us and around us ; that the age of miracles, as it ever was, now is." And yet we all shall find, sooner or later, probably, no classical utterance to be more profoundly rooted in truth, than that "The dice of God are always loaded,"—no scriptural assertion more certain of realization than that "The wages of sin is death"; for careful scrutiny ever discloses the fact that evils like forces are correlated, and always lead to the grave.

Faithlessness in man s physical nature and in the uni-

verse constitutes very complete barriers to advancement not only hindering progress but laying the foundation for common dishonesty and crime. Though not so appalling in its effects, the lack of an unquestioned standard of morality has undoubtedly a bewildering influence upon many.

Including morality in religion, theologians have answered the question, How may we know when we are right? or, What is the rule for right action? variously. The Roman Catholic Church declares that the combined wisdom of the Church itself, as embodied in its laws and dispensed by its officers, must constitute the only rule for individual action. The Protestant Church, holding that all our knowledge of true religion depends upon the record, maintains the Scriptures as the basis of morality and religion; while a German school of theology, claiming that individual judgment must determine the moral character of every act, has, within a few years, declared that the human conscience is the only arbiter of human action.

Philosphers, striving by rigid analysis to reach some fundamental law of right action, have varied still more in their conclusions. According to Confucius, "Filial piety is the root of all the virtues." Pythagoras held that the mind must be absorbed into the unity of being, and hence he declared the necessity for strict regimen by which the soul mortifies the senses and restricts their dominion. The doctrine of Socrates was that "Virtue is a knowing," because it is said Socrates could not conceive how a man could know the good and yet not do it.

The stoical Zeno said, "Live according to nature and follow her." Said Plato, "Make thyself like to God." "Become like the perfect man," said Aristotle. According to Epicurus, men should strive to attain that true pleasure which consists in tranquillity of mind. As the Greek philosophers differed in their ethics, so the ethical systems of Arabia differed; so differ the German and the French schools.

Something of the diversity in the English ethical systems is seen in the fact that Hobbes based his theory on pure selfishness, while Hutchinson's ground was pure benevolence; that, according to Price, virtue is conformity to a moral law, while Paley resolved all virtue into utility; and that while Locke referred all morality to sensation, Butler referred it to the moral sense, Hume to instinct, and Beattie to common-sense.

In fact, the world has been filled with philosophies and plans for right living, from the Pentateuch of Moses to the "Law of Love" of President Hopkins, from Buddha's mysticism to Herbert Spencer's Social Statics; and taking into account the existence of so many different theories and systems, and also the fact that in order to frame a complete system of morals, there must be, in the first place, a complete comprehension of man, some have concluded that a science of morals is impossible. Yet, as Froude justly observes: "That we have been often wrong does not imply that we may not be right at last. Our *faculties* have a correspondence with truth. They were given to us to lead us into truth, and though they fail many times they may bring us right at last."

There are positive as well as negative difficulties in the way. False teaching is one. If right living should lead to perfection, all schemes of education, in general, which have reference to the immediate only, and not to the possible in man, are defective. A few years of preparation cannot be regarded as sufficient to offset all eternity; especially when these few years are employed in gaining a knowledge merely of the most approved methods of amassing wealth. If this theory be true, an acknowledgment of that fact would doubtless suggest changes in educational methods and subjects. Probably more attention would be given to the law of individual development, and the facts in regard to race development would be more thoroughly investigated.

If this theory be true, it would be sufficient perhaps to impress that fact on the mind of every youth and leave him free to solve the problem in his own way; since independent power and happiness must be secured, it is evident, so far as possible by independent effort.

Race development and the problems growing out of it have been the most difficult questions for society to settle. If right living leads to perfection, a simple and complete solution to all these problems is offered; which fact may be regarded as strongly affirmative of the question.

Pope says:

> "All nature is but art unknown to thee;
> All chance, direction which thou canst not see;
> All discord, harmony not understood;
> All partial evil universal good."

Regarding this as sound philosophy, we must conclude that progress consists largely in readjustments and the destruction of social factors no longer useful. Thus polygamy at an early period was undoubtedly a great benefit to the world, but in civilized countries to-day it is clearly the reverse. The "partial evil" of antagonistic systems becomes more apparent as time rolls on. For illustration, compare Shakerism and Fourierism: both holding that the "Revelation of God is progressive"; both claiming to embody the truth; both centered upon love as an axis; yet the one enjoining absolute continence, the other absolute freedom. If the former's teachings prevailed with all, not only would much misery ensue, but the race would soon be depleted, if not eradicated. While results prove that the exalted if visionary theories of Fourier, when put in practice, become nothing more than criminal licentiousness. Yet we can conceive of social conditions where to know virtue would be to practise it—where the incitives to practise it would be no greater than the resultant pleasures; where the central element of these two systems should prove triumphant, though practised without restriction. For if "Knowledge is the wing wherewith we fly to heaven," love is the atmosphere through which we must pass; which, like the earth's atmosphere, supports by its resistance, and vivifies all by the beautiful imagery it affords. Free love has been the rock on which many an earnest and honest investigator has shattered his philosophic bark; either because he combined it with what appeared to be its most natural and obvious function, or because he confounded

a probable future condition of the race with the present. That love has a higher function than the voluptuary revelling in "The rank and steaming valleys of sense" assigns it, or the chimerical believer in some *judicious* social system of sexual selection claims for it, is capable of proof. If right living leads to perfection, the highest function of love is not the propagation of the race, but the development of the individual. To the investigator who recognizes the fact that the same agent at one stage of progress may perform an entirely different function from that performed at an earlier stage, this view will seem neither absurd nor strange. However necessary it may be to health and happiness, relatively considered, we have already seen that in its lower function love is sooner or later self-destructive, and tends to the destruction of the individual. Besides, all love, whether of nature or of man, has the same source in the surplus energy of the individual; and upon this surplus energy of the individual all advancement must necessarily depend. Until this fact is recognized; until intelligent men and women agree to hold love as a destructive agent in abeyance so far as possible, and to employ their surplus energies in the development of keener sensibilities and greater intellectual acumen; until, by mutual agreement of the sexes, all exercise of *instinctive* love comes to be regarded with pity rather than scorn and contempt; until the jealousies arising from sex relations come to be considered as brutish rather than human, can we look for any great degree of advancement. If we follow the advice of John Stuart Mill, and "Stick to the argument from design," we shall

find ample evidence to prove that love has a higher function than science has been wont to claim for it, in the fact that its workings are manifested quite as frequently where it meets no acceptance, or where it cannot be satisfied, as where it is reciprocated, or admits of satisfaction. In this view, unsatisfied love, while a seeming evil, may be a positive good.

If this conclusion be condemned as unnatural, we must remember that in the same sense of the word all progress is not natural but artificial; since savages rather than civilized men are natural. If this conclusion be condemned as harsh and cruel, it may be answered that all implied harshness is owing to our disjointed and ignorant social condition probably. Even if severity were necessary, the end sought would justify all the pangs which

"Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over Locksley Hall,"

could harrow up—all the sorrow for a

"Rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore,"

—all the agony which lover or mistress ever endured, if only love's refining influence should attain its perfect work. Those saddest words, "It might have been," must be regarded as sad merely as a sentiment, but not as a fact; for if *it had been*, abstractly speaking, we might never have had the poem or the poet:

"Pet Canary, pretty creature, warbling in his cage,
Beautiful and bright his plumage, just the singing age,
All alone he hung suspended in the morning light,
When within a swinging mirror, something caught his sight.
Alas, my pet Canary!

"Hushed his voice, his wings upraising, all intent his eye,
Striving in that charming vista that same form to spy;
Then there burst in sweetest cadence on my listening ear
Such a song as I can hardly hope again to hear.
My pretty, pet Canary!

"It was first exultant, thrilling, strong, and full of glee;
Then it fell to softer accents, sad as sad could be—
Singing to his own reflection all the live-long day;
Yet I could not find the heart to take that glass away.
My poor, deceived Canary!

"But his song so full of rapture, was it all in vain?
Was there not in joyous feeling much the greater gain?
For pervading all the household, trembling on the air,
Merry music touched each spirit, lightened every care.
Happy, blithe Canary!"

The evidence of love's exalted office lies in the sufferings it has soothed, in the sympathy for justice and right it has created, in the restraints it has secured over lawless passion, in the ideal of beauty it has incited, in the deeds of nobleness it has inspired.

No one can afford to be Pharisaical or censorious in this matter. While monogamy must be upheld as the guardian of purity, too often it is but a screen for immorality; and those who would "cast the first stone," if judged by an absolute standard, would doubtless rank lower than the unfortunate social outcast. Yet if life be life and heaven possible, if every exertion for the right must have its effect, there is no sadder picture than those present who, with infinite possibilities before them, pass through life as driftwood to the ocean, clinging at times

to some fixed and worthy purpose, yet feebly struggling with the eddies of dizzy passion or the current of circumstance, till they are finally swallowed up in the great sea!

The ideal Christian heaven is somewhat indefinite, but if it should be determined by the prevailing ideal of this life and its practices, it is a question whether the heaven of the majority, if realized, would be any thing more than a Mohammedan paradise. The positivist's view seems equally hopeless, for with positivism morality seems to be comparatively without significance. Of what use to

> "Join the choir invisible
> of those immortal dead who live again
> In lives made better by their presence,"

when the period comes that there are no lives to make better?

Says Mallock: "When the individual dies, he can only be said to live by metaphor, in the results of his outward actions. When the race dies, in no thinkable way can we say that it will live at all. Every thing will then be as though it never had been. Whatever humanity may have done before its end arrives, however high it may have raised itself, however low it may have sunk itself

> "'The event
> Will trammel up the consequence, and catch,
> With its success, surcease.'

All the vice in the world, and all its virtue, all its pleasures, and all its pains, will have affected nothing. They will all have faded like an unsubstantial pageant, and not left a wrack behind."

Accustomed to believe that

> " Life is real, life is earnest,"
> And the grave is not its goal "

shall we conclude, then, that life is a fraud and man merely its dupe

The law of Malthus points to a period of misery if not starvation for the race, if the world's population increases without check. Yet, as W. R. Greg has pointed out, such an evil may be not merely obviated by the restraints of cerebral development and kindred influences, but a danger incurred quite the reverse of this, and the " race multiply too slowly rather than too fast." As knowledge increases such would seem to be the inevitable result, unless that knowledge should contain the potency of life to man individually.

The eternity of matter and of force has been inscribed on the banners of science ; the facts of history and of progress are assured ; then who can doubt that that omnipotent Force which is in and through all existence works to increase and develop intelligence—to the end of perfectionment in man ?

The dangers of fanaticism must not be overlooked; for the efforts of the fanatic, aside from his own personal hurt, may be serious hindrances to progress : through mistaken zeal, if his cause is bad; and if the reverse, by belittling the principles he represents. What more admirable human quality, however, than the indomitable earnestness of the fanatic ? True, this is not very apparent in such instances as that of St. Macarius, sleeping in a marsh and exposing his body naked to the

stings of insects; or of the pious Silvia, who on religious principles never washed any part of her person except her fingers, yet the same quality in a Tycho Brahe, a Kepler, or a Columbus, readily excites admiration. Religion, in which the term originated, seems to have been the peculiar province of fanaticism. Says Milman: "According to the monastic view of Christianity, the total abandonment of the world, with all its ties and duties, as well as its treasures, its enjoyments, and objects of ambition, advanced rather than diminished the hopes of salvation. Why should they fight for a perishing world, from which it was better to be estranged?" It would not seem that a doctrine upholding the grandeur and beauty of the material world, and urging the employment of all means to improve and perfect man's nature here and now, would be so liable to develop fanaticism, as a doctrine based upon some unknown mode of existence. Yet there are examples. In the year 1700, John Asgill published "An argument to prove that by the new covenant man may be translated into eternal life without tasting death." He regarded death subsequent to Christ's sacrifice as the result of an obstinate habit, which he intends to avoid. Having discovered "an engine in Divinity to convey man from earth to heaven," he will "play a trump on death and show himself a match for the devil."[1]

This project to scale the walls of existence at a leap seems to have been induced chiefly by the emotional nature. Fanaticism is doubtless developed in this field through false reasoning also. Man has many weaknesses,

[1] Alger's "Doctrines of a Future Life," p. 431.

from which existing notions of a heavenly existence quite naturally release him. Accordingly, if one is led in any way to believe that the present life is capable of infinite extension, he may begin at once to eliminate all personal defects. Such an effort is certainly laudable, but if not taking into account the fact that deeds of permanence require for their attainment long periods of time, he seeks immediate results, fanaticism is likely to develop. Man requires food, of a certain quality and quantity. And though this requirement may be a weakness and defect, as viewed in the light of human perfection, yet to attempt by prolonged abstinence to improve upon these ordinary needs, would be much like trying to rise in the world by pulling on one's boot-straps. Fully one-third of his time man passes as a vegetable, in sleep. Sleep, then, from the millennium stand-point, is a weakness ; yet no one can go without sleep, and it would be simply madness to make the attempt. The question of sleep, it may be remarked, is not fully understood, and along with kindred subjects affords opportunity for investigation.

Psychical growth and reproduction are antagonistic, and it is easy to see how fanaticism might spring from this idea on the part of one desirous of developing his own nature and life. Let the asceticism of the past be the monitor to such a one. Let him read the warfare between animalism and extravagant asceticism, which has raged for more than three thousand years—the struggles with nature of pagan Stoics, Jewish Essenes, and Christian monks. Let him survey the astounding

penances of the desert saints; the corruption and demoralization of sacerdotal classes; the hypocrisy of the *Mulieres Subintroductæ;* the consecration and self-sacrifice of female devotees; the humble penitence of self-constituted celibates, which displayed itself in all good works,—and perhaps his mind may be led to discriminate between the expedient and the perfect. The culture of to-day is undoubtedly indebted to the rigid if revolting asceticism of the past, both for that hereditary influence which incites self-restraint and for the pious precepts which inculcate virtue. Yet allowances must be made in judging of the past and its literature. The lesson to be drawn from Charles Reade's romance of "The Cloister and the Hearth" is certainly as important as that implied in the apocryphal story of "Paul and Thecla"; and perhaps if the actual truth could be known the terrible penances of anchorites would be reduced in many cases to very mediocre affairs. The distinction between mortifying the physical nature, the actuating motive chiefly in the pagan and monachal systems, and developing that nature, is an important one; yet individual attainment must depend upon individual judgment. Knowledge, labor, and love, the true agents of progress, are also the true remedies for fanaticism, and wherever these lack appreciation the fanatic may be looked for.

Isaac Jennings, in a work entitled "The Tree of Life," published in 1867, looks forward to the speedy coming of Christ and the millennium—to a time when "Children, being no more born in sin, will attain to the full stature of perfect men, and there shall be no more death."

The attainment of physical perfection, according to this work, will be the result of treating diseases upon "orthopathic" principles, and the disuse of stimulants, including "alcohol, tobacco, coffee, tea, animal food, spices, and caraway."

To the paradise of Mr. Jennings no women need apply; for "from 'femininity' comes effeminacy, which though highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God."[1] Like the old Jewish writer who declares that "The badness of men is better than the goodness of women," Mr. Jennings outlaws the entire sex. This is not merely inconsistent, it is stupid. If woman be worse than man, she is also better. If in the outset man was tempted by her, to her alone must man finally look for guidance. For though the head may plan, it is the heart that leads. The key to paradise is love; not love as shown merely in the passing smile, the youth's bright glances or the maiden's blush, but love with all its pains as well as pleasures, with its sorrows and its joys, which permeating the soul as sunlight the heavens, though clouded at times, contains the potency of highest glory. The key to paradise is love, and woman holds that key. Love alone can overpower and control the desire for life, and when these two strongest elements of man's nature are combined, what can be more powerful? Will they lead him to perfection? Indebted to woman as we all are for life, upon her larger sympathies and quicker conscience much must depend. Childhood's plastic nature is moulded by her hand, and if heaven lies before us, the

[1] See review in *The Radical* for March, 1868.

eye of youth will be quickest to discern it. "Except ye become as a little child," says the great Teacher, "ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven."

CHAPTER VII.

SPIRIT AND MATTER.

Terms—The Doctrine not Materialism—Not Spiritualism—Correlation of the Vital and Physical—Animism—Mistakes—John Milton—The Analogy of Sleep—Powers of the Perfect—Extravagance—The Earth and the Unseen—Job—The Dreariest and Brightest—Continuity—Infinity Inward—Conclusion.

TO be known to belong to a popular sect is sometimes sufficient to screen one from odium, whether he actually understands the principles of that sect or not. Such is the influence of terms—an influence to which all are more or less subject. Partly for this reason, we hasten to say that if the doctrine considered in the foregoing chapters be carefully examined, it will be found to partake of both spiritualism and materialism. That it involves something of both seems to be decidedly favorable, since each of two systems so extensive, though opposite, would seem to possess some truth.

This doctrine of *immortality*, however, is not materialism, because it regards life, spirit, or soul, as something more than matter, and advocates the development of this life, spirit, or soul, to the limit of perfection. Neither is this doctrine purely spiritualistic, because it regards matter as being quite as necessary to organic existence as spirit. Confessing inability to see how force of any kind can exist without something to act upon, it confesses the same inability with regard to the action of "vital force" when life ceases, and holds that the exist-

ence of pure spirit disconnected from matter, is something at least difficult to understand. Yet without denying the ancient doctrine of animism, it simply claims that there is no logical ground for supporting it.

The mistake of spiritualism (so-called) seems to be in ignoring the present life, the only basis of real knowledge. If this life be a preparatory stage for a future life, is it more probable that that future life is of a kind corresponding to this, or totally unlike this? The *life* we now possess *is* spiritual life, if we mean by spirit the converse of matter; and all our ideas of loveliness and grandeur are spiritual, though standing for material forms. Substance seems to be necessary in any mode of being. Those who are so prone to despise the gross substance of which things here are composed, should they ever happen to get into that *hypothetical spiritual future*, would they not be liable to exercise the same propensity, and despise the substance of things there? We prefer to believe with Milton "That man is a living being, intrinsically and properly one and individual, not compound or separable, not, according to public opinion, made up and framed of two distinct and different natures, as of soul and body—but the whole man is soul, and the soul man; that is to say, a body, or substance, individual, animated, sensitive, and rational."[1] We may be surrounded on all sides as Swendenborg held by the invisible spirits of an unseen universe, but so long as there is positive proof only that man can approach to such angelic natures by improving on his condition here, there is no advantage in the theory.

[1] "A Treatise on Christian Doctrine." By John Milton. Vol. i, pp. 250, 251.

"Time may come, when men
With angels may participate, and find
No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare;
And from these corporeal nutriments perhaps
Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,
Improved by tract of time, and, winged, ascend
Ethereal,"—

but we see no royal road to such a result as offered by death, which befalls one through accident or ignorance.

Regarding the fact that every impulse of heart and brain is impressed, as by the photographer's art, in a thousand forms on surrounding matter; regarding the fact that nothing is lost in the universe, the analogy of sleep, which takes away our consciousness each night, to return it with the sunlight, possessed of renewed energy, suggests that the consciousness which that long sleep of death takes from us may return again. But we can only conceive of man then as now, made up of body and spirit, and if such a period shall ever come, its arrival would seem to be somewhat dependent on a comprehension of the laws on which his being depends.

Few would claim a future life for brutes, yet some brutes would seem to merit it as fairly as some savages, and some savages as fairly as some civilized people. The only logical conclusion is that humanity must work out its own salvation. And it may be, if that condition of power as well as joy desired by so many is ever reached, that the fortunate winners will remember their friends fallen in the race. And if the eye of the perfected man be keen enough to read the books of the universe and the records of the dead, if he possess the impartial judgment we may

suppose him to possess, it may be that the brave and worthy of all time will be remembered. At least all those whose former record should warrant the supposition that for them to live again would be life indeed, and not renewed disappointment and death. For the perfect man would achieve the victory not by his own efforts merely, but as the result of the efforts made by the honest, faithful workers of all time. And he would indeed be ungrateful if, possessing any power, whether of a personal or intercessory character, he did not use it in their behalf.

If this seems extravagant language to any one, let him question himself whether he does not now entertain equally extravagant notions of a future life—and perhaps less practical and less definite. If not, he may be fairly entitled to criticise, though not to deride.

Select the dreariest scene of all the earth, the arid desert or the frozen north—yet if the heart be right and the conscience untroubled, the intelligent observer cannot fail to discover beauty and grandeur there. Increase that intelligence—quicken that vision, and we know that the beauty and grandeur would be proportionately increased. The startling revelations of microscope and telescope are not due merely to refraction and the accurate definition of the objective, but to mind which makes the observation and which invented and constructed the instrument. If once that mind could fully recognize the laws of its own structure, why should not still greater power be attained?

Let an observer, as some Queen Mab reclining above the natural earth, behold as they roll by, forests of uncul-

tivated loveliness, cities with their palaces and stately domes, majestic oceans and the blue islands nestled upon their gold-fringed bosoms, long lines of transit spanning continents and binding as in a fairy chain the peaceful hamlet, rugged mountain, and enchanted lake; let the vision of such a one move from the auroral crowned regions of the north, along glaciers and ice-fields, over plains of fir and cypress, amid corn-fields and yellow grain, through orange orchards and luxuriant tropical foliage, until again an ice-crested ocean bounds his sight; let him watch the shadows of evening as they creep over the camp-fires of happy hearths, in peace-embowered vales, on the upland, and by the sea, till shrouded in night all nature slumbers; let him gaze upon the silver threads of morning, weaving a canopy for the western hills, until the shadows have all fled, and each streamlet, lake, and mist-haunted valley yields up its ghostly vestments to the golden, glorious sunlight,—and deny if he can that earth indeed is heaven! Where are the achievements, the hopes, the memories of man, but here? The mines and quarries of science are here. The depositories of history are here. The gardens, the palaces, the railways, the bridges, the machinery, the books, the paintings,—in a word, the treasures of art are here. All the materials requisite for the most exalted purposes are here—man alone is lacking. Man can exclaim with Job, "I am a brother to dragons and a companion to owls," for his fate is seemingly like that Job bewails: "I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death; a land of darkness,

as darkness itself ; and of the shadow of death without any order, and where the light is as darkness."

And yet there is no man who, gazing upon the most enduring monuments that earth affords, "the everlasting hills," or unchanging granite beds, that does not feel himself to be greater than these—who cannot reason with himself as Elihu with Job : "The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life ! " And who shall say that that spirit in man, which, working through the centuries, encumbered with false theories, dwarfed by the blight of withering ignorance, distorted by the action of scorching passion, has chiselled the human countenance divine from the repulsive features of an ape, —who shall say, that when freed from these influences it may not build him up into a god ?

If the earth at times seems dreary, it is because man's spirit is dreary ; because through ignorance, folly, or social influence, which, as things are, he may be powerless to control, the true current of his life is perverted. To such a one, death may be a boon ; and yet the universal law of justice affords a powerful argument in support of the supposition that all such shall live again. In that same law of justice there is, moreover, an equally strong argument for the continued permanence of our planet.

If the earth should its destiny reach this year,
And the fears of fanatics prove true,
Why should we have reason, in that case, to fear ?
Or why such catastrophe rue ?
For a balance hangs up in the sky,
And every man's cause
Shall be judged by the laws
That govern the heavens on high.

Should humanity now have more reason to dread,
If the world were so near to its close,
Than the millions of beings once living, but dead,
Had in thinking of their final woes?
And if no balance hangs in the sky,
Or, if any man's cause
Be not judged by its laws,
What matters it when we shall die?

But the beacons of liberty shining above
Disclose it through tyranny's night,
And the torch-fires of justice which men ever love
Reveal its proportions so bright;
And a balance does hang in the sky,
And every man's cause
Shall be judged by the laws
That govern the heavens on high.

Then the prayers of the nations down-trodden and crushed
Would be mocked by the echoes of space,
If the earth to its final destruction now rushed,
And right would to error give place.
By the balance that hangs in the sky,
Which shall try every cause
With its unerring laws,
The end of the world is not nigh!

The earth with its millions its path shall pursue
Yet for æons and æons of years,
Till the false and unjust shall give place to the true,
Till the light shall have scattered all fears;
For the balance that hangs in the sky
Hath determined its course,
Through the all-potent force
That governs the heavens on high.

Science and revelation unite in declaring that the earth shall finally pass away; but with that catastrophe the question of man's physical immortality has nothing to do. The principle of continuity as an element of mind requires that man's future life should be a continuation of this; and with this matter satisfactorily settled, we need fear no future. If infinity be, as it seems to be, inward as well as outward, that intelligence which should be the true goal of man's effort now will doubtless be competent to exist with any and every change in matter. The question which should occupy the attention now is practical and admits of immediate application. If the period for realizing such a scheme be far distant, it is none the less worthy of our attention now, and portends a condition not less worthy of present effort to attain. Shall we believe in the possibility of such a result? If it be true, it is quite immaterial whether we as individuals believe it or not. If it be true, committed to an unswerving purpose of knowing that truth, supported by the approval of loving hearts, relying on the inferences of scientific research, knowing that no pleasure, whether sensuous or intellectual, can equal the exalted satisfaction of a sympathetic, honest, and virtuous life, strong men shall arise, such as the earth has rarely if ever seen, who shall have, to guide and assist them, women of strength and beauty of character unsurpassed—and these shall attain that excellence to which we even now are urged as those of old were in the words: "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all *these things* shall be added unto you!"

> The gnats beneath the summer's pregnant wave
> Know not their future is the upper air;

That free-winged moth's existence it shall share,
The chrysalis, within its seeming grave,
No token gives : so man, the abject slave
Of circumstance, may still be heir
To life and happiness beyond compare ;
For power exists, if he but knew, to save !
If life is but a sleep and a forgetting,
It is because we cherish merely dreams,
And blindly crush the cup we hope to quaff ;
New stars arise for every one that 's setting,
We, thoughtless, fail to see their hopeful gleams,
And call the world a farce and life a laugh.

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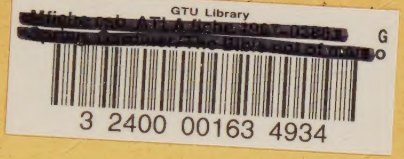

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